

INTRODUCTORY LECTURES

TO THE

SACRED BOOKS

OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

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MCCCLXXX.



TO THE READER.

THE following work being more concise than any thing of the kind that has yet been published, will recommend itself to those students who wish to attain the necessary knowledge of their profession without the labour of wading through much learning. The learned may possibly find some entertainment in it, particularly in the introductory account of each book of the New Testament, which fills more than the latter half of this volume. As the author appears to have wrote chiefly for the use of his pupils, without an intention of provoking controversy, any singularity of opinion will be the less offensive in him. He seldom departs from received opinions, without having considered his subject, at least as thoroughly as the majority of those who receive them. As he differs from the learned Dr Lardner in some things, it may be necessary to observe, that Dr Lardner's supplemental volumes were not published till after the publication of this; the mention of which in this place is not meant to decide how far the sight of that learned work might have influenced our author to change his opinions. If this book should prove in any degree useful to those who apply themselves to the study of the New Testament, the translation of it will be abundantly justified. And if the learned among us should find it in any respect exceptionable, the author seems to be so hearty a well-wisher to the study of the sacred writings, that he will not be mortified to find his book the means of producing something more perfect, of the same kind, from another hand.

P R E F A C E.

WHOEVER desires to understand the books of the New Testament clearly and fundamentally, must not content himself with the use of common expositors and commentators. He will stand in need of some more general accounts of the history and designs of this sacred book, which are but imperfectly known, not only by the unlearned, but even by those who profess theological learning. Whoever, for instance, is unacquainted with the age and authority of the different versions, is not qualified to apply them to the purpose of forming a right judgment of those various readings, upon which interpretations are grounded. If we know not the design of each apostle in compiling his gospel, and writing his epistle, we cannot perfectly understand him. If we know not whether there are Hebraisms in the apostolical writings, we shall be at a loss what credit to give to those expositors who illustrate the Greek text from the Hebrew, and other oriental languages. The following work is intended to remove such ignorance.

It will be objected, perhaps, that the several Prolegomena treat at large of the design of each book; and as to the general knowledge of the language, the readings, the manuscripts, and the versions, we have such a fund of it in *Simon's* famous critical history, that he seems to have exhausted those subjects. Perhaps some good natured reader may invent for me the apology, that I intended no more than a translated extract from that valuable work. But I wave this opprobrious excuse, and have too great a respect for the Public to hazard my credit by any undertaking of that sort. But the question having been asked me, whether I was drawing up an abridgment of *Simon*? I think myself obliged to explain, how far I have endeavoured to offer something new to the world.

Father *Simon* is learned and copious on the subjects before mentioned, and yet we find this great defect in him, that he doth not enumerate the manuscripts of the New Testament. I have here supplied that defect, and briefly referred to the writings, in which the curious reader may meet with a further account of each.

Simon is more copious on the subject of the versions than on any other; but so many discoveries have since been made on this head, that a vast field of knowledge remains, after having gone through his excellent work. My reader will be sensible of this, if he considers the accounts which later writers have enabled me to give of the *Arabic*, *Ethiopic*, and the pretended *Gothic* versions; and which I have been qualified to give of the *Syriac* version, by a frequent use and careful examination of it; and of the *Armenian*, from the history of *Moses Chorenensis*. The extracts and specimens, which *Simon* gives of some versions, are not in the least depreciated by this work; for the reader not finding them here, must still have recourse to him.

The work of collecting and determining the various readings of the New Testament was hardly begun in the time of this eminent writer; and the most important discoveries of this kind have been made since his time. But some subjects, essential to a critical history of the New Testament, are left wholly untouched by *Simon*, those, for instance, which I have considered from Sect. 37. to 43.

As to the introduction into the individual books of the New Testament, I can safely hazard the comparison of my labour with the *Prolegomena* and expositions of others. They have left me such abundant gleanings of matter, useful and necessary towards understanding the New Testament, that the bare comparison of my book with theirs will amply excuse me.

It may be necessary here to give some account of the method and disposition of my work, in order to render

at more useful to the reader. I could not entirely pass over matters which have been fully discussed by others. but I have studiously endeavoured at brevity, whenever their books have appeared to me to be generally known, and have only been diffusive when the books I referred to were so scarce as to make an extract from them necessary, or when I was obliged to collect the matter which was scattered in different books. In the latter case, I have cited the works of others as authorities; in the former, I have referred my reader to them, as books worthy of his perusal. Whoever therefore desires a fuller introduction than mine, to the New Testament, need only consult the authors to which I have referred him, who will explain to him more at large many things which I have discussed briefly, because they were already considered by them. But I have chiefly given a loose to my pen, when I had any thing new to propose, though the intended limits of my book obliged me sometimes to be shorter than I wished to be; a restraint the less violent upon me, because I intend to make this book the subject of my public lectures, and was therefore not very unwilling to reserve for those lectures some things which are not to be found in other authors. The same limitation of my plan rendered it necessary to treat no farther of those books of the New Testament, which have not been received unanimously by the primitive church, (*viz.* the five catholic epistles, and the revelation of St John), than merely to aim at proving something more decisively concerning the time of the latter, than hath hitherto been done. These books merit a particular and fuller discussion, because their divine authority is exposed to several objections; and I remain indebted to my reader with respect to them.

I have treated in general of the *genuine antiquity, the language, the readings, the manuscripts, the principal editions, the marks of distinction, and the aspirations and accents,*

accents, the ancient versions, and the divine inspiration, of the books of the New Testament. This last is the foundation of our religion, which too many are apt to build upon a sandy foundation. I have therefore taken the more pains to throw a greater light upon this matter, and shall rejoice if my readers are as fully convinced as I am myself, by what I have written of the divinity of all the books of the New Testament. After this I proceeded to the introduction into the individual books, in which I have endeavoured to be as concise and as useful as possible. I intended at first to have treated of the commentators upon the New Testament in general, and upon each book in particular. But being circumscribed in my design, I omitted this, and expunged great part of what I had drawn up. I could not cite and pass a judgment upon all the commentators. *Simon*, in his *histoire critique des Commentateurs du Nov. Testam.* has already given a sufficient account of the ancient fathers, and the most considerable modern commentators and expositors, to his time. I had not much to add to his work, and was at the same time unwilling to make extracts from a work so well known. There are indeed many comments upon scripture, by the oriental fathers, in the Syriac tongue, left untouched by him; but as I could only be acquainted with them in *Afemani Bibliotheca Orientalis*, I was not qualified to judge of their merit, and could have done no more than giving a chronological list of their names and works. *Lilienthal* in his *Bibliotheca Exegetica* delivers an account of the best and most distinguished commentators, and I apprehended my account of them would not have succeeded so well as his. I was besides apprehensive, that in quoting only the truly good and valuable comments upon the New Testament, I should be reduced to the mention of very few names, and be obliged to repeat them too often; and the reader might have imputed to me as a defect in my work, what is real-

ly owing to the want of matter. And in the last place, I was very well pleased, if by a tolerable pretence I could rid my hands of a labour, for which, as I had no thoughts of imposing upon my reader by ill grounded encomiums, I should hardly have had the thanks of all those whose writings I quoted, or censured, or passed over in silence.

I must mention one circumstance more, which has had an influence upon this work. The work itself, and the impression of it, was begun in the year 1748; but some other unavoidable undertakings hindered me more than a year from finishing it. This will account for one or two seeming inconsistencies, and the omission in one place of what is supplied in another, particularly for the mistake of supposing the *Codex argenteus* to be *Gothic*, which is afterward rectified, when I shew it to be written in the language of the ancient Franks.

This is all I have to offer on the subject of this introduction to the sacred books of the New Testament. My remaining time will be employed in a work in which I propose to illustrate the Old Testament, though in a manner somewhat different. The Old Testament cannot be duly explained without a just idea of the Hebrew tongue, of its history, revolutions, and relation to other languages. If the Hebrew be, like other human languages, related to the Arabic, Syriac, Ethiopic, and other tongues, then the method of investigating the signification of Hebrew words must be different from that which we pursue, if it be a language invented by God himself, of which the words have a signification purely philosophical. Whence is it that we have not one tolerable Hebrew lexicon, but because they, who have undertaken a work of that kind, were unacquainted with the history of the language, which alone could point out to them the sources to which they ought to have recourse? Whence is it, that many imagine the signification of a Hebrew word to be proved if it be taken from the Rabbins, but because they are

are unacquainted with the history of the language? How happily would many succeed in learning the oriental languages, and how much would their labour be facilitated if they had acquired at school, before they enter the university, a knowledge of the history of these languages. But being deficient in this, they often follow an inverted method in learning them.

I have therefore already begun to write a HISTORY OF THE ORIENTAL LANGUAGES; and should think my labour well bestowed, even if I gained no other end, than that of having this book read in schools, by those who are devoted to the study of divinity, and of giving them such ideas of the oriental languages as may facilitate the study of them, and lay a foundation for the interpretation of the Old Testament.

The first chapter treats of the primitive language of man, which I believe to be somewhat related to the Hebrew, though it be not Hebrew. In this I shall endeavour to trace out the general laws of language, according to which men first invented words, gave them significations, and added new significations to the old ones; in which I shall chiefly adopt the principles laid down by the late *M. Schultens*. The second chapter contains the history of the *Hebrew*, *Rabinical*, and *Samaritan* tongues. I shew *Hebrew* to be properly the *Canaanite* language, and not rightly called *Hebrew*, which name the evangelists give more justly to the *Chaldean* tongue. I answer the question, Whether, and how far it was intermixed, in the earliest times, with some entirely foreign languages by means of the trade of the Phenicians? I treat of its antiquity, and shew from thence that the books of *Moses* could not be forged by *Ezra*. I give an account of the copiousness, the poetry, and the declension of that language; and how it became known again among the Jews, and at length among the Christians. In my account of the Hebrew lexicons, I shall recite and criticise the several opinions

opinions concerning the means of attaining a knowledge of the signification of Hebrew words. I shall here likewise regulate my judgment by that of *M. Schultens*, though I am of opinion, that in some respect he proceeded too far ; in which cases I shall avoid his mistakes. In the last place, I propose to treat of the age and figure of the *Hebrew* characters, and shall both relate and attempt to decide the famous controversies on that head. In the same method I shall discuss, in the third chapter, the history of the *Syriac*, *Chaldean*, and *Talmud* languages, and, in the fourth, that of the *Arabic* and *Ethiopic*. If I find myself qualified to treat largely and fundamentally of the *Coptic* or ancient *Egyptian* tongue, that will be the subject of the next chapter ; else the fifth chapter will contain an account of what is known, and still extant, concerning the *Carthaginian* and *Palmyrene* languages.

As the contents of this chapter will most excite the curiosity of those literati who do not apply themselves to the study of the Oriental languages, especially since the modern discoveries of the ruins of *Palmyra*, of which the inscriptions have not been understood, I was particularly desirous to have it in my power to gratify the laudable curiosity of my readers, by something new and interesting on this head. I am well acquainted with the remains of the *Carthaginian*, (which was the *Tyrian* or *Canaanite*, and consequently the Hebrew) tongue, which we find in *Plautus*, *Jerom*, *Austin*, *Sam. Petit*, *Phil. Gaeus*, *Bochart*, *Majus*, *G. Henr. Saphun*, in *Rodbeck's Atlantis*, who pretends to derive this language from the North, and particularly in that scarce and valuable work of *Aldrette*, upon the Antiquities of *Spain* ; and I am possessed of those books, and shall apply them in aid of my design. But if any one can point out to me any other work relating to the *Carthaginian* tongue, he will very much oblige both me and my future readers, and I shall not fail to make him due acknowledgments in public.

I must at the same time confess myself not satisfied with *Aldrette's* account of the characters upon the Carthaginian Coins. I stand in need of a better explanation and shall be thankful to those who will communicate me some solid conjectures concerning these and the *Paemyrene* characters.

I was willing to mention the design of my work in this preface, because I wish to write something worthy of the attention of the public, and in order thereto shall want the assistance of the learned. I shall not precipitate my work, for the nature of it demands time; and if the publication should not be very speedy, I hope the delay will not be considered as a change of my resolution.

Göttingen, March 6, 1756.

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OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

SECTION I.

Of the title, THE NEW COVENANT, or TESTAMENT.

THE inspired books, which were written after the ascension of Christ into heaven, are commonly called *ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη*, i. e. the *New Covenant*. It cannot be affirmed that they derived this name, either from God himself, or from any of the sacred writers. But the church began very early to borrow it from Mat. xxvi. 28. Gal. iii. 17. Heb. viii. 2. ix. 15-----20. and was authorised in so doing by St Paul himself, who calls the holy scriptures before the time of Christ, *αλλὰ καὶ διαθήκη* 2 Cor. iii. 14.

This title admits of a twofold interpretation; and it is a matter indifferent which is received. According to the passages of scripture from which it is taken, it should doubtless be rendered *Covenant* *. In this view the New Covenant signifies, A book containing the terms of the

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* See Pearce on the epistle to the Hebrews.

New Covenant between God and man. But according to the meaning and design of the primitive church, which gave this name to the writings of the Apostles, it must be rendered, The New Testament; it being certain, that the first Christian writers used the word *διαθήκη* in the sense of a testament; and the Latin version, of which we shall shew the great antiquity in the sequel, renders the words, Mat. xxvi. 28. "Hic enim est sanguis meus Novi Testamenti."

The sacred writers make use of no title to denote the collective books of the New Testament*. They sometimes refer to their former epistles; and Peter quotes Paul in his second epistle, chap. iii. 15, 16. But they never mention the whole collection of their writings which was not then formed. They were handed about singly among the Christians, and it was natural to defer the collection of them into one volume, till after the decease of those holy men, from whom the church had reason still to expect more inspired writings, whilst they lived.

SECTION II.

The writings of the Apostles and Evangelists proved to be ancient and genuine.

SOME adversaries of the Christian doctrine have been so bold and shameless as to deny in a lump the antiquity claimed by each of these books; *i. e.* to deny that they were written in the first century, by the writers to whom they are ascribed. Toland is charged with having betrayed

* It is pretended indeed, that *παρα γραφήν* all scripture, 2 Tim. iii. 16. must agreeably to St Paul's meaning comprehend the books of the New Testament; but it is plain, that *παρα γραφήν* means no more than *κατὰ τὰ γραμματα* did in ver. 15. and as Timothy had learnt these from a child, they could hardly include the writings of the Apostles.

betrayed a suspicion of this sort in his *Life of Milton*; but in his *Anyntor, or Defence of the Life of Milton*, he disavows his having meant the writings, which we receive as inspired, by the words upon which the charge is grounded*. But an anonymous Italian, ventured, in a letter to Le Clerk, to throw out the following suspicion; "It is possible that in the fifth century, about the time when the Goths over-ran Italy, four men of superior understanding might unite in inventing and forging the writings of the Apostles, as well of the Fathers, and falsify some passages of Josephus and Suetonius, in order to introduce into the world, by the means of this fraud, a new and more rational religion."

These four men, who must have been very conversant in the Jewish theology, and in both Jewish and heathen antiquity, are here charged with the immense labour of forging all the writings of the fathers, and of inventing that diversity of stile and sentiment, by which they are distinguished from each other. But it would not have been safe for our sceptic, to attribute to them a less laborious enterprize. His credulity, which in the present age men commonly affect to call by the name of unbelief, would have been shocked by the testimony of the fathers had he confined his imputation of forgery to the Apostles. Le Clerk returned a strong and sensible answer to this letter, in his *Bibleotheque ancienne et moderne*, tom. xxi. p. 440.

However, there are very few unbelievers among Christians, who have thrown out this suspicion against the writings of the Apostles†; and indeed it is so manifest-

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* See Toland's *Life* prefixed to his works, and Mosheim's *Vindicie, antiquæ Christianorum Disciplinæ*.

† Mohammedans, though they admit Jesus to have been a true Prophet, consider all the books of the New Testament, as either corrupted or spurious. Their profound ignorance of history renders it difficult

ly groundless, that whoever does throw it out, must be impudently invincible by truth and argument. For,

1. The style of the Apostles is so different, that their epistles could not without great difficulty be written by the same hand. St Paul is uniform in all his epistles; his manner is plainly different from that of other writers, and very difficult to be imitated. At least all the epistles to which his name is prefixed are the work of one hand. St John again is totally different from him; and whoever writes in a style like that of St Paul, cannot imitate the style of St John.

2. In order to invent writings, and ascribe them to persons who lived some centuries ago, it is necessary to have an understanding and judgment, and a knowledge of history and antiquity beyond the powers of man, else the inventor must commit frequent errors. Now the writings of the New Testament are unexceptionable in this respect. The better we are acquainted with Jewish and Heathen antiquity, with the history of the Romans, and the ancient geography of Palestine, the face of which country was totally changed by the conquest of the Romans; the more clearly we discern their agreement with the New Testament, even in some circumstances so minute, that probably they would have escaped the most artful and most circumspect imposture. The commentators abound with observations from antiquity, which may serve to exemplify this: the learned Dr Lardner in particular has done eminent service in this respect.

3. The most ancient Fathers, even those who were cotemporary with the Apostles, Clemens Romanus, for instance, and Ignatius, quote the books of the New Testament, and ascribe them to the Apostles. We must therefore

cult to convince them. If they could once be brought to receive right notions of history and chronology, these would soon overthrow their religious tenets.

TO THE NEW TESTAMENT.

therefore either suppose with the Italian above mentioned, that all the writings of the fathers for some centuries were forged; a suspicion which may be more effectually removed by medicinal applications than by the force of argument; or we must admit the books of the New Testament, which they quote, to be in fact as ancient as they are pretended to be.

4. There are some very old versions of the New Testament; the Latin at least, seems to have been done so early as in the first century after the birth of Christ; and it is highly probable that the Syriac version is not less ancient.

Is it possible to suppose, that some centuries after Christ, when the Hebrew tongue was not understood in the western church, either some blind chance proved so fortunate, or the cunning of some Italian impostures was attended with so much thought and learning, as to add to the credibility of the writings forged for the Apostles, by an extempore Latin version full of Hebrew idioms, and by a Syriac interpretation? not to mention the Gothic translation of Ulphilas, which, besides, was done before the irruption of the Goths into Italy.

SECTION. III.

The divinity of the books of the New Testament confirmed by miracles.

BUT if these writings are as ancient as they are pretended to be, they certainly carry with them an undeniable and indelible mark of their divine original: For the epistles refer to certain miraculous gifts, which are said to have been imparted by the imposition of hands, and to have been conferred by God, in confirmation of the oral and written doctrine of the Apostles. If these Epistles are ancient and genuine, and written by St Paul

to the churches to which they are addressed, then none can deny these miracles. The matter is important enough to merit further attention.

St Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians is addressed to a church which was hardly founded, to which he had not preached the gospel more than three Sabbath days, Acts xvii. 2. He had been obliged to quit this church abruptly, on account of an impending persecution, ver. 10. and being apprehensive lest the persecution should cause some to waver in the faith, he lays before them, in the three first chapters, arguments to prove the truth of his gospel. The first of these arguments is, that which confirmed his doctrine at Thessalonica, chap i. 6—10. "For our gospel", says he, "came not to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost." Power is an expression made use of elsewhere in the New Testament to signify miraculous acts. Admit him only to have been a rational man, and we cannot suppose him to write this to an infant church, if no member thereof had ever seen a miracle of his, or received a miraculous gift, of the Holy Ghost, by the imposition of his hands.

He appeals to the same proof, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, who were extremely dissatisfied with him and his manner of teaching, 1. Cor. ii. 4. "My speech, and my preaching, was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit, and of power." The spirit is a word he elsewhere uses to signify the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, such as the gift of tongues, &c.—The Hebrews were on the point of falling off from Christianity, yet he confidently tells them how great their condemnation will be, if they deny a doctrine, to which God had borne "witness with signs and wonders, and gifts of the Holy Ghost." Heb. ii. 4. and chap. vi. 4. 5. He remonstrates to them, that they had been "made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and had tasted the powers of the world to come."

"come." In like manner he endeavours to convince the Galatians, who had deserted the pure doctrine of the gospel, that the law of Moses was abolished; by putting to them this question, "Received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

Gal. iii. 2. Is it possible, that a deceiver, of a sound understanding, such as St Paul's epistles shew him to have possessed*, should refer the enemies of his religion, of his office, and of the doctrines which distinguished him from other sects of his religion, not only to the miracles which he pretends to have wrought, but to miraculous gifts which he pretends to have communicated to them, if they had it in their power to answer, that they knew nothing of these miraculous gifts?

In the 12th, 13th, and 14th chapters of the first to the Corinthians, he reprehends the abuse of certain miraculous gifts of tongues, and prescribes a better application of them. If he actually wrote this to the Corinthians, and they had no miraculous gifts, no knowledge of foreign tongues, then St Paul is not an impostor but a madman, which, I apprehend, is not the charge of unbelievers against him.

But if these miracles be true, then the doctrine, and the book in confirmation of which they were wrought, are divine; and the more certainly so, as there is no room for deception. A juggler may persuade me, that he performs miracles, but he can never persuade me, and a whole body of men of sound intellects, that he has communicated to us the gift of working miracles, and speaking foreign languages, unless we can work the miracles, and speak the languages.

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* See Benson's appendix to his Paraphrase on the Epistle to Philemon.

SECTION IV.

An objection to the divine inspiration of the New Testament considered.

It has been objected indeed, that, "Though the doctrines are divine, it does not follow that the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists are so; and these writings no where pretend to a divine inspiration, which they ought, if we are bound to receive them as divine."

I might answer to this, that the Prophets promised a more perfect revelation of the will of God under the New Testament, than that under the Old, and that therefore it may be presumed some new inspired writings were necessary; that the doctrine of the gospel superseded the law of Moses, which being contained and delivered in inspired writings, could not be abolished by writings uninspired; and that the words of the great prophet Jesus Christ, which are so much more excellent than all the words delivered by all the Prophets, were worthy to be recorded, in a manner the most unexceptionably credible.

But the reflection which most satisfies me, is this: most of the writers of the New Testament, Matthew, John, Paul, Peter, James, and Jude, were Apostles, that is, of the number of those to whom Christ had, in the clearest manner, promised a divine inspiration, merely as preachers of the gospel, which was to extend, not to the matter only, but even to the words. Mat. x. 19. Mark xiii. 11. Luke xii. 11. xxi. 15. Now their writings, upon which the Church of Christ was to be built, being of much more importance than their sermons, it is highly probable that they were no less assisted by the Holy Ghost in writing, than in speaking.

If, besides, we consider, that the Apostles prefer themselves to the Prophets, 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11. and are justified in so doing by the declaration of Christ, Mat. xi. 9—11. they seem in fact to claim a divine inspiration, whenever they stile themselves at the beginning of their epistles, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and thereby declare those epistles to be authoritative. We may apply to them what Aben-Ezra says of the man of God, in Deut. xxxiii. 1. "He adds this, in order to shew that he blessed them as a Prophet."

But besides all this it must be mentioned, that St Paul in 1 Cor. ii. 10. 12. 13. 16. and Gal. i. 12. doth expressly pretend to a divine inspiration.

SECTION V.

The New Testament was written in Greek.

THE writings of the Apostles, which have been transmitted to us, were all written by them in Greek, except the Gospel of St Matthew, and the epistle to the Hebrews; for these were first published in the Hebrew dialect in use at Jerusalem. But the Hebrew text being lost, the Greek translation has the authority of an original.

The Greek language was at that time known to almost half the world; throughout the Roman empire, and in that part of Asia which had been formerly conquered by the Grecians: it was therefore the proper language for those books, which were to be read, as far as possible, by the whole race of mankind. With respect to the Jews, from whom the first converts to Christianity were taken, it was a more proper language than the Latin, because it was already known to them by the Greek version of the Old Testament. Hence St Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans, and St Mark his gospel, which was de-

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signed more immediately for the use of the Italians, not in Latin, but in Greek. And this language had been already consecrated by the version just mentioned of the Old Testament, that is, the words and phrases of it had by use obtained that determinate and peculiar signification, which they were to bear in theology; so that the Greek was better adapted to express divine truths, clearly and precisely, than any other western language.

God having thus proclaimed his word in this heathen language, not as before, in the Hebrew, but with another tongue, according to Isa. xxviii. 11. did thereby intimate to his people, that the word of God should be taken from them, and communicated to the heathens.

SECTION VI.

The Greek of the New Testament is intermixed with Hebraisms and Syriasm.

THOSE Jews who spoke Greek corrupted it, as our Jews do the modern languages, with their own: hence arose that which some call the *Hellenistic* dialect, in which the Old Testament is translated by the Seventy. And this is throughout the language of the New Testament. The Greek is not pure, but intermixed with Hebrew and Syriac phrases. I shall treat separately and briefly of each.

It is manifest at first sight, that there are Hebraisms in the New Testament: whoever denies it, either doth not understand Greek, or is blinded by prejudice. *ἄκουε, ἀκούει*, are undoubtedly Hebrew words. There are Hebrew proverbs, Mat. xix. 24. Hebrew constructions and significations of words. It has even happened, that the Jews not perfectly understanding some Hebrew words, after the Babylonish captivity, their mistake produced new Greek phrases among them, such as, *οὐκ ἔστιν*

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Thou hast said, which in Mat. xxvi. 25. xxvii. 64. is used for an affirmation. The Hebrew words כִּן דַּבַּרְתָּ signify, Thou hast spoken right, but as כִּן may signify *scilicet*, the Jews, and particularly the Greek translators of the Bible, have been induced to render these words by *συμφωνῶ*, *συμμερίζομαι*, or *ὁμοθυμαδόν*, Exod. x. 29. and to consider and use both the Greek and Hebrew phrase as expressions of assent.

After the Babyionish captivity, the Hebrew or Canaanite language was gradually diffused among the Jews, and the Chaldee was introduced at Jerusalem, and the Syriac in Galilee. Mat. xxvii. 46. John v. 2. Acts i. 19. It is therefore no wonder that Chaldeisms and Syriacisms should occur in the Greek New Testament.

We find, for instance, 1. Syriac or Chaldee words, Mat. vi. 24. *Μαμμωνας*; 1 Cor. xvi. 22. *μαρὰν ἀθά*. 2. Syriac constructions; Mat. x. 32. *ὅτις ὁμολογήσει ἐν ἐμοί*; see the Syriac New Testament, Acts xxiii. 8. 1 John i. 9. 3. Syriac and Chaldee significations of words; *δυναμις* frequently signifies a miracle; and *ἐπισκιάζειν*, to overshadow, Luke i. 35. signifies to inhabit. See the Syriac New Testament, John i. 14. and the Thargum upon 1 Chron. ii. 15.

It cannot be denied however, that there are in the New Testament many elegant and pure Greek phrases, which have been used by the best and most ancient writers, and are peculiar to the Greek language. Hence, in order to understand the New Testament fundamentally, it is necessary to be well acquainted with the ancient Greek authors; though a clearer light may be derived from the oriental languages, the Septuagint version, and the works of the Greek fathers, than from the best classic authors. For the use of profane writers in illustrating the New Testament, see Raphellii adnotationes in Nov. Testam. ex Xenophonte collectæ, Hamb. 1709.—item, ex Polybis et Arriano, 1715.—item, ex Herodoto, 1731.

Kirchmayer,

Kirchmayer, parallelismus novi fœderis et Polybii, ratione dictionis; Richteri adnot. philolog. in Nov. Test. ex Diogene Laertio; and other works of the same kind, by learned and diligent hands, which it is to be wished may be continued by more of the same character.

SECTION VII.

It is no blemish in the New Testament that it contains Hebraisms and Syriasm.

SOME divines have thought it strange and incredible, that Hebraisms, Chaldeisms, Syriasm, or in a word, barbarous expressions, should have been discovered by linguists in the New Testament, imagining it a violation of the respect due to sacred writings. But the following considerations will convince us, that these barbarisms are no real blemishes, but rather beauties, in the stile of the New Testament.

Barbarisms, or words and phrases taken from another language, are blemishes of stile only, when the writer endeavours to be elegant, or when they render his language obscure. M. Voltaire, the best French writer of the present age, in the preface to the Anti-Machiavel, p. 19. admits some expressions which are not genuine French, but deserve to be so. In the New Testament, nicety and elegance of language was both unnecessary and useless. It grounds a presumption in favour of the Christian doctrine, that the Apostles neither preached nor wrote in flattering and enticing language, to win the mind by insidious arts of speech; consequently the first Christians were not converted by any thing pleasing to their ears, but by a conviction resulting from argument; 1 Cor. ii. 1.—15.

The first Christian Churches, for whom more immediate

ately the Apostolical writings were drawn up, consisted of Jews. St Paul himself preached the gospel only in those places where Jews resided, and made use of them to pave the way for him to the Gentiles. As therefore they wrote to people, whose native language was the Jewish-Greek, as it was natural to write to them in that language, as to write to a German Jew, not in pure German, but in what may be called the Jewish-German.

Most of the writers of the New Testament were Jews by birth. They could not therefore without a manifold and frequent miracle avoid a mixture of Hebrew and Greek in their style. Such a miracle would have been not only useless, but pernicious; for any one, who was not prepossessed with an opinion of the divine inspiration of these books, would raise a doubt of their authenticity from this circumstance, that they were not written in the style which might be expected from their pretended authors.

It was desirable for the church to have the writings of the Apostles in a scripture style; and as the Greek version of the Bible abounded in Hebraisms, it was necessary for them either to give up the advantage of writing scripturally, or to be less concerned about a barbarism, than pedants and fastidious scholars usually are.

It is, in the last place, observable, that the four gospels are chiefly translations of such discourses of our Saviour, as had been delivered in the Syriac or Chaldee language. In a translation of this kind it was necessary to deliver, not only the sense, but as far as possible, the very words and phrases of the speaker; which could not be done consistently with a strict regard to the purity of the Greek language.

SECTION VIII.

The arguments considered upon which Hebraisms are denied to be in the New Testament.

I MUST, in point of justice, take notice of the grounds upon which a perfect purity in the Greek language of the New Testament is asserted. They are best stated in Georgii vindiciæ Nov. Testam. ab Ebraïsmis. He argues thus :

1. " St Paul in 1 Cor. xiv. 8—10. condemns unmeaning barbarian language ; consequently the holy scriptures admit of no such."

I answer, βαρβαρος signifies in that passage a Foreigner ; consequently the language of a barbarian is a language wholly foreign and unintelligible, such as Arabic would have been to the Greeks. But in this sense the style of the New Testament is not barbarous, it being the same Jewish-Greek which was used in the Christian churches.

2. " The Apostles addressed those foreigners who came to Jerusalem, on the first feast of Pentecost, ἕκαστος ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ, every one in his own tongue."

Ans. Consequently they did not speak pure Greek to the Jews who came thither from Greece, but Jewish-Greek.

3. " The books of the Old Testament are pure Hebrew ; consequently those of the New are pure Greek."

Ans. This advocate for the stile of the New Testament seems to have forgot the writings of Solomon, and of the inspired penmen, during and after the Babylonish captivity ; which are full of Chaldeisms.

4. " God is the author of the distinction of languages, and being a God of order cannot be supposed to confound them."

Ans. God did not form languages, but left the tongue of man to its natural course. To maintain the contrary is to multiply miracles to an endless number. Besides, the Jewish-Greek was a language spoken among the Jews, and as such, was upon our author's own principles, a language derived from God.

If he should lead us back to the confusion of tongues at Babel, his argument will prove more than he intends; for then the sacred writers must have written the Greek, not of their time, but of two thousand years before, as it was spoken at Babel.

These advocates for the purity of stile in the New Testament endeavour moreover to palliate the pretended Hebraisms, by various quotations from Greek authors, and to make them originally Greek. But in order to do this, they either misquote passages of the New Testament, or of some Greek writers; or they take their instances from authors who did not write pure Greek; from the Fathers, or even from the Septuagint; or again, they produce, perhaps, after much labour and pains, two instances, to prove an expression originally Greek, which occur perhaps fifty times in the New Testament. See Rhenferdus's preface to his *Syntagma dissertationum de stilo Novi Testamenti*.

SECTION IX.

History of this controversy.

THE principal collectors of the Hebraisms in the New Testament are,

Caspar Wyssius, professor of Greek in the Upper College at Zurich, in his *Dialectologia Sacra*, published at Zurich, 1650. He treats largely of these Hebraisms, and divides them into thirteen classes, but asserts at

last, that they cannot strictly be called a distinct dialect.

Thomas Gataker, in his *Dissertatio de stilo Nov. Testamenti*. His work is levelled at Seb. Pfochenius. The other writers on this subject are collected, and published in one volume, by Jacob Rhenferd, at Lewarden, in 1702. Since his time Jo. Conr. Schwartz published two of them, Olearius and Boeclerus, with notes of his own, in a separate volume.

Salmasius in comment. de Hellenistica attacks the name of *Linguae Hellenistica*, which was commonly given to the language of the New Testament. He was answered in an anonymous piece by Dan. Heinsius, to whom he replied in his *Funus*, and his *Ossilegium Linguae Hellenistica*. He is rather learned than useful, and too full of scholastic subtilties to be read with pleasure.

The following authors have attempted to deny the Hebraisms in the New Testament.

Seb. Pfochenius in *Diatr. de Linguae Graecae Nov. Testamenti puritate*. Rhenferd in the preface to his *Syntagma*, gives a very unfavourable idea of the character of this Pfochenius.

Balth. Bebelius, in his *Exercitatio Pilolog. de phrasi Nov. Testamenti*: This piece is also in Rhenferd's Collection.

Balth. Stolberg, de *Soloecismis et Barbarismis Graecae novi foederis dictioni falso tributis*.

And Christian Sigism. Georgius, in his *Vindiciae Nov. Testamenti ab Ebarismis*, and his *Hierocriticus Nov. Testamenti dialectum novi foederis Atticam vindicans*.

Though in the main I differ from this writer in opinion, yet his writings are of use, in illustrating many phrases of the New Testament from those Greek authors which are in danger of becoming almost unknown.

SECTION X.

Of the pretended Latinisms, Arabisms, Persisms, Solecisms, and Idiotisms, of the New Testament.

BESIDES Hebraisms, the New Testament is charged with Latinisms, Arabisms, Persisms, Solecisms, and vulgar phrases or Idiotisms.

It cannot be denied, that many phrases in the New Testament which are in themselves obscure, have been illustrated from the Latin authors. For instance, Rom. v. 7. compared with *Æneid.* viii. 364. and 2 Cor. ii. 17. compared with the expression of Ennius, *cauponantes bellum*, in Cicer. Off. l. i. chap. 12. But as the Latin is a language descended, and not degenerated, from the Greek, these phrases might originally be Greek, and thence derived to the Latins. Besides, the Roman conquests introduced many Latin words and expressions among the Greeks, which were so far naturalized, that we need not reproach them with their Latin derivation. At least it is unaccountable, why the Apostles who were not Latins by birth, should admit more Latin phrases into their writings than other Grecians.

This likewise grounds a just prejudice against the pretended Arabisms and Persisms, if the former be not at the same time Hebraisms. Nor are we at liberty to conclude from the long dominion of the Persians over the Jews, that the Jewish became intermixed with the Persian tongue; for we may gather from the book of Ezra, that the Persian Kings did not issue edicts in Persian to their subjects on this side the Tyger, but kept a separate Chaldean chancery for them. However there are in the New Testament some words originally Persian, but which also occur in the best Greek writers, such as *αναπτυσιν*,

Mat. v. 1. Herodot. l. viii. c. 98. γὰρ Acts viii. 27. μαγὸς Mat. ii. 1.

The pretended solecisms are most effectually exploded by Schwartz de Solecismis discipulorum Jesu antiquatis, who shews, that the passages, which have been ignorantly censured as such, are often the highest elegancies of stile in Greek.

There is no foundation for presuming, that the New Testament contains any language properly called vulgar: For though our Saviour passed for the son of a carpenter, and most of his disciples were fishermen, and though the Spirit of God usually leaves every writer to his own stile, yet, according to the ancient constitution of the Jewish state, no certain conclusion can be drawn of the meanness of any man's station, from his following a mechanic employment. And it appears from those passages of the New Testament, in which Jesus is called Rabbi by his enemies, that he was considered as one who professed literature, and his disciples as the students or scholars of a professor, who are not supposed to make use of the vulgar stile.

SECTION XI.

Of the passages of the Old Testament quoted in the New.

THE writers of the New Testament frequently quote passages from the Old, either in proof of their doctrine, or to shew, that the prediction of prophets are fulfilled. Whenever this is their point in view, the passages they quote from the Old Testament must, in their literal sense, signify what they are alledged to signify. It is an inexcusable presumption in Le Clerk, and other interpreters of scripture, to pretend, that the Apostles cite the authority of the Old Testament in the Jewish way of drawing conclusions,

clauses, which in sound logic would have been rejected. If they were under the influence of the Spirit of God, we cannot suppose their writings to contain any false reasoning, however common it might be among their countrymen to argue absurdly.

But sometimes they only borrow certain phrases of the Old Testament thereby to convey their own thoughts, upon very different subjects. In these cases an interpreter would find it a fruitless labour, were he to attempt to prove, that the passages quoted from the Old Testament bore the same sense which they have in the New. See Rom. x. 18. compared with Psal. xix.

The quotations from the Old Testament are chiefly taken from that Greek version, which is fabulously ascribed to the seventy interpreters, and which was probably done without the order of any Egyptian king, by some Alexandrian Jews, and was by the great reputation of the Alexandrian Synagogue introduced among all those Jews who understood Greek. It is therefore of great use to be well acquainted with this version, of which Brettinger's is the best edition. The Apostles make use of this version, even in instances where the Greek interpreter mistakes the sense, but where the mistake does not affect their argument. See Mat. xv. 8. 9. 1 Cor. x. 8.

They do not however always adhere exactly to the words, but sometimes change them; a liberty in which the ancients must be indulged, since, for want of books they frequently quoted merely from their memory. See Heb. i. 6. Psal. xcvi. 7.

In Luke iv. 18. and some other passages, the Greek version seems to be quoted with an emendation. Whether any Chaldee version is sometimes quoted, which was in repute in Palestine about that time, is uncertain. It is a mere conjecture, unsupported by evidence.

As the Apostles were chiefly Jews, and had at least received the Old Testament from the Jews, it is no wonder, if, among other innocent things, they closely imi-

tate the Jews in their manner of quoting the Old Testament, particularly in not referring minutely to the place from whence the passage is taken, and at the most, only pointing out by some principal word in that part of the book. Luke 20. 37. Mark xii. 26. Rom. xi. 2.

The best book to be recommended on this subject, is Surenhusii βιβλος καταλλαγis.

SECTION XII.

The original manuscripts of the New Testament are lost.

AUTOGRAPHA, or original manuscripts of the New Testament, are the first copy of each book, either written by the Apostles with their own hand, or dictated by them. This last was commonly done by St Paul, as may be gathered from Rom. xvi. 22. Gal. vi. 11. But least letters should be forged and circulated in his name, he wrote the concluding benediction of his epistles with his own hand. Compare 2 Thes. iii. 17. 18. with chap. ii. 2. and 1 Cor. xvi. 21.

None of these original manuscripts are now extant unless we suppose that gospel of St Mark to be one, which is preserved at Venice; but so illegible, that it is not yet decided whether the letters are Greek or Latin. There is no doubt of its antiquity, but there is still great doubt of its being an original manuscript. Indeed it is scarce possible, without a miracle, that these originals could have fallen into our hands; and if we had possession of them at present, yet they would not avail us, since criticism did not flourish in the primitive times, and consequently we could have been at no certainty, whether the pretended original manuscripts were genuine or not.

It appears indeed from a passage of St Ignatius, in the eight chapter of his epistle to the Philadelphians, that some of the first Christians appealed to the original manuscripts then extant, and held them in great veneration; but it also appears that they were treated contemptuously for this, by those fathers of the church whose authority was greatest among them. His words are, "I have heard some say, if I do not find it in the original manuscripts of the gospel, I will not believe it; and when I tell them, Thus it is written, they answer, Here are the original manuscripts. My original manuscript is Jesus Christ; the incorruptible writings are his cross, and his death, and his resurrection, and faith in him." With these poor conceits he glosses over a false quotation from St Matthew against the Docetæ*.

Tertulian, in his book *De Prescriptionibus*, Sect. 36. appeals to many originals then still subsisting; and Peter, an Alexandrine bishop of the fourth century, refers to an original manuscript of St John's gospel, preserved and worshipped at Ephesus†. But true criticism being then unknown, and it being common for superstition and deceit to affix old names to new things, it is clear, that the testimony of these men cannot be securely relied on.

SECTION XIII.

False readings have crept into the copies of the New Testament.

ALTHOUGH it be undeniable, that the first Christians bestowed great pains upon the copies of the New Testament

* For the true meaning of his words, see Pfaff dissert. de genuinis Nov. Testam. lectionibus.

† See Dionys. Petavii Uranologia, p. 397.

ment, yet nothing less than a repeated miracle could possibly prevent the admission of some errors, and the increase of them with the multiplication of copies. This is manifest from the many errata remaining in books, which are printed with the greatest care, and revised with the utmost accuracy. If the text of the New Testament had been free from all errata and false readings, then it would have been necessary in every copy to have the aid of a miracle as often as the transcriber would have committed an error without it.

Some indeed are so inconsiderately zealous as to deny, that there are various readings in the New Testament, which amounts to this, that God has performed some millions of needless wonders which he never promised. But it is in vain to argue against those who are too blind to see, that there are various and consequently false readings. Milne alone has collected no less than 30,000 various readings, and yet left many undiscovered. Now it is certain, that two different readings of the same passage cannot both be right, and that the errors of copyists could not be inspired by the Holy Ghost *.

SECTION XIV.

But this doth not affect the grounds of our faith.

We are not to conclude, however, that the Christian faith is shaken, or rendered uncertain by the many various readings in the New Testament: On the contrary, it has been the opinion of judicious men, that the large collection of them made by Doctor Milne, hath removed many doubts, which might arise in reading the New Testament.

* See Michaelis tract. de variis lectionibus Nov. Testam. colligendis et dijudicandis.

Testament, about the genuineness of passages, which contain important articles of faith.

Most of the various readings are only trifles, which do not even alter the sense of the words; such as $\alpha\chi\gamma\alpha$ for $\alpha\chi\iota\gamma\alpha$; $\epsilon\lambda\alpha\tau\tau\alpha\iota$ for $\epsilon\gamma\gamma\alpha\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$ or $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\varsigma$ for $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ *. Others alter indeed the sense of the passage, but the alteration doth not affect any article of faith; when for instance, the conclusion of the Lord's prayer, Mat. vi. 13, is omitted in very many and important manuscripts. Others again do indeed shake a single argument for a doctrine, but the same doctrine is taught clearly in other passages, which have no various reading.

The collectors therefore of the various readings of the New Testament deserve the thanks of all sensible Divines, and their successors will deserve further thanks. Without such collection, we rely upon a single manuscript, or a single edition. And upon which can I securely rely? Is the transcriber, or editor, or printer, whom I follow implicitly, directed by the spirit of God, always to chuse the right reading? What rational man will affirm this? And it must be admitted, that some passages otherwise obscure, have been illustrated by a reading, which the diligence of these learned men hath discovered.

SECTION XV.

The source of false readings.

It is impossible to judge rightly of the various readings of the New Testament without being acquainted with the source from which false readings proceed.

1. Most

* See Kuster's Preface to Milne's New Testament. "It may seem perhaps a superfluous labour to collect the various readings which do not alter the sense; but those which appear most insignificant, may hereafter be of consequence; of which we have an instance

1. Most of them proceed from the negligence of transcribers, who being impatient to copy much in a short time, sometimes committed mistakes in orthography, sometimes even exchanged words for others, which appeared to them to be of the same signification; sometimes they were misled by the similar strokes of letters, sometimes by the similar sound or pronunciation of words; especially when the similar sound of a preceding word was still in their ears, such as, in Rom. i. 30. *κακαλαλως* for *καταλαλους*, occasioned by *κακοηθειας* in the preceding verse. For it frequently happened, that the transcribers had not the text before them, but were dictated to for the convenience of employing several transcribers at once. Sometimes syllables, words, and even entire lines, were omitted through negligence, especially when their sound was similar to that of preceding or subsequent words; sometimes the same syllables were copied twice, though they were capable singly of forming a word.

2. When two sentences of the New Testament were nearly alike in their words and import, it has often happened, that one of them has been corrupted from the other, either through the negligence, or the ignorant caution of the transcriber. This is most frequent in the writings of the Evangelists. In like manner, when passages of the Old Testament are quoted, with some variation of the words of the Septuagint, transcribers often take the liberty of inserting an amendment from the Septuagint.

From this practice is described the following fundamental rule for determining various readings: "Whenever

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stance in the distinction made by Socinus between *Θεος* and *ὁ Θεός*. The reader, besides, may be enabled to judge from these minutiae of the merits of the manuscripts of the New Testament whether they are carefully or negligently written.

“ one reading of a quotation corresponds exactly with
 “ the original, and another is not so exactly like it ;
 “ then the former is suspicious, and the latter deserves
 “ the preference, unless the former be well supported by
 “ authority.” This rule has been frequently violated,
 and even inverted, by some half-learned men, who by a
 caprice of fortune have been turned into critics. It is com-
 mon among them, to alledge in proof of the genuineness
 of a reading, that it is exactly the same in another pas-
 sage of scripture.

3. Many variations have been introduced by conceited
 transcribers, who not having knowledge sufficient to un-
 derstand an expression, have ventured what they call a
critical conjecture, and substituted other words nearly re-
 sembling it in sound and letters. This liberty is not whol-
 ly disused even among the learned of the present age.
 If any thing occurs in an ancient writer, which may ap-
 pear obscure to one who is not versed in languages and
 antiquity ; or if a thought occurs, which demands too
 much reflection, or is so abstruse, that they themselves
 could not have hit upon, or do not comprehend it, they
 hastily advance their conjecture, and substitute another
 word more generally intelligible. This was the very
 conduct of the ancient transcribers.

Hence we justly draw the following rule : “ When-
 “ ever two different readings occur, one of which seems
 “ difficult and obscure, but may be explained by the help
 “ of antiquity and a more accurate knowledge of the
 “ language ; whereas the other is so easy that a child
 “ may apprehend it ; in such case, the latter is suspi-
 “ cious.” For it is not natural for a transcriber wilful-
 ly to change a clear passage into a more obscure one ; and
 it is not natural for inadvertency to make so lucky a mis-
 take, as shall seem to allude to remote antiquities, and
 such as are known only to the learned. It is amazing

how strangely this rule too has been inverted by persons from whom one might least expect it.

4. Many false readings have arisen from hence, that ignorant transcribers have removed into the text what they found in the margin of their original. It is usual to explain an obscure passage, or to supply a defect in history, by a marginal note: How easy was it for an ignorant man to mistake this for a part of the context, which had been inadvertently omitted, and so was added in the margin! Possibly it was by this means that the conclusion of the Lord's prayer first crept into the text of Matt. vi. 13. that sentence having been added in the margin from the Greek Liturgy. It is yet more probable that this was the occasion of the whole passage, which some insert, Matt. xx. 28; the words run thus in Martian's edition:

“ Vos autem queritis de pusillo crescete, et de majore
 “ minores fieri. Intrantes autem ad cœnam rogati no-
 “ lite discumbere in locis eminentioribus, ne forte clarior
 “ te superveniat, et accedens, qui invitavit te, dicat tibi
 “ adhuc deorsum accede. Et erit tibi confusio. Si autem
 “ in loco inferiori discumbueris et supervenerit humilior
 “ te, dicet qui te ad cœnam vocavit, accede huc sursum.
 “ Et erit tibi huc utilis.”

These words are hardly transferred hither, by the mistake of an inconsiderate transcriber, from Luke xix. since there is not the least similitude, in the two gospels, between what goes before and follows after them: yet they are so well adapted to the rest of our Saviour's discourse, that I am persuaded he actually made use of these words on that very occasion, on which some copies insert them, though they should not have been originally recorded by St Matthew. A Latin Christian, who had it from tradition, might write the words in the margin, which afterwards procured them a place, at least for a time, in the text.

5. The fathers frequently accuse the heretics of having corrupted some passages of the New Testament in support of their errors. Accusations of this kind, from men zealous for their doctrine, being seldom strictly true, it may be safest to deduct at least one half of the charge. It is incredible, that the heretics so grossly corrupted the scriptures, as is sometimes pretended, at least the Arians seem to be unjustly accused of it by St Ambrose. The Gothic bishop Ulphilas's version grounds a prejudice in their favour. He was an Arian, but left no traces of his error, not even in those passages which prove the eternal divinity of Christ. But on the other side, there is some probability that the heretics were not wholly free from the guilt they are charged with. They lived in an age, in which it was common to defend what men conceived to be the truth, by falsehood, and false conclusions, and we know, that they invented and forged entire gospels. As we are obliged to admit this, why should we labour to acquit them of a less heinous charge.

6. But it must be confessed at the same time, that the orthodox have now and then corrupted the true reading. They had two motives to induce them to this.

Sometimes they endeavoured to defend the truth with improper weapons; an instance of which was, their forgery of the Sibylline books; or they studied to get rid of an objection which they were not qualified to solve in the regular way. We have an instance of this in St Ambrose's third book *De Fide*, chap. 3. where he takes pains to suppress the words *ὁ υἱος*, Neither the Son, Mark xiii. 32. and I am afraid, we have in 1 John v. 7. a more remarkable instance of the interpolation of a passage, by men too zealous in contending for the truth. It is certain at least, that the verse is not to be found in any one Greek manuscript, nor in any ancient version, except most of the copies of the Latin version.

Sometimes they omitted, in the most public copies,

some passages, merely from an apprehension, that they might prove offensive to some. Thus there are copies which omit what is said of the signs of the weather, Mat. xvi. 2. 3. lest any one should take occasion to accuse Christ of superstitious prognostications; and St Austin in the second book, *De Adulterinis Conjugiis*, cap. 7. conjectures, that the story of the adulterers, John viii. 1.—11. was for this reason omitted by some, lest it should seem that adultery might be committed with impunity; though he justly calls these manglers of St John's gospel, instead of orthodox and cautious men, "*Viri modici, vel potius inimici veræ fidei.*"

As we have not received the New Testament from the hands of heretics, but of the orthodox, or ruling party in the Christian church, we have but little room to suspect false readings and interpolations by heretics. We have rather cause, in those cases, where a reading whose antiquity is not sufficiently proved, can be applied with advantage to the defence of the true faith, to cast some suspicion upon the very hands of men with whom we cordially agree in faith.

7. Bengelius, in his *Adparatus Criticus ad Nov. Testam.* points out one more source of false reading, to wit, that some transcribers when they had committed a blunder, committed a wilful one, in one of the next words, in order to point out, and as it were, to correct the other. Thus, the Augsbург copy of the gospels, N. 1. in Luke xiv. 9. reads *συ*, instead of *σοι*, and to correct this, in ver. 12. instead of *αντικαλισωσι*, we read *αντικαλισωσι*.

The more narrowly we examine the occasion of this or that reading, the better we shall be able to decide which is the true or the false reading.

SECTION XVI.

Principles by which to decide in various readings.

THE principles upon which various readings may be decided, are of two kinds. They are either drawn from the sources before mentioned of false readings, from the connection, and from the effect, which one of the two readings may have upon the truth or sense of the passage; or an appeal is made to ancient Greek manuscripts, to the old versions, which have preserved the reading of their time, and to these writings of the Fathers, in which texts of scripture are quoted.

The principles of the second kind are the most weighty, but must not be separated from the others. I shall consider both.

SECTION XVII.

Principles drawn from the sources of false readings.

IN order to determine from the probable causes, or sources of various readings, which of them deserves the preference, it will be necessary to subjoin, to what hath been said above, the following rules:

1. "If a reading, which might easily be occasioned by a mere blunder of a transcriber, be found only in a few manuscripts, then it is of no moment, and may be rejected with the greatest probability." This rule is particularly applicable in cases where a similar beginning or ending of two successive lines may be considered as the occasion of omitting one of those lines.

2. "If a reading which conveys no sense at all, can be manifestly traced up to a mere error in copying, it is to be absolutely rejected."

3. "It is necessary to examine which of two readings 'might arise out of the other?'" The genuine one is probably that from which the other may be easily derived, and which could not so well take its rise from the other.

SECTION XVIII.

From the connection.

A READING, without which the context is obscure and unconnected, doth indeed justly merit the preference; (See John v. 4. but it must be confessed that the connection is too often pleaded, and sometimes unjustly, in order to support this or that reading. The writers of the New Testament are apt to be concise and abrupt. They often presuppose things which were known in their time, but are not known now. No impartial person can affirm of them, that their stile is always perspicuous in the highest degree, especially if compared with the language and style of the present times. I except the narrations of St John. It is therefore, in many cases, right to give the preference to that reading, which is somewhat obscure, and of which the connection is not immediately obvious to every one.

The same must be mentioned with respect to the Greek constructions. The observation made by Bengelius in his *Adparatus criticus* in Nov. Testam. p. 778. is particularly just and applicable. The construction of the whole Revelation of St John is broken, and rather Hebrew than Greek; whence, in most cases, that reading is to be considered as the true one, whose construction is broken, and not strictly consonant to the rules of grammar; thus chap. i. 5. ἀπὸ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ μαρτυροῦ τοῦ πιστοῦ chap. ii. 20. τὴν γυναικα ἢ ἀγγελοῦ,

SECTION XIX.

How to determine when one reading gives a false sense.

IF the sense of one reading be manifestly false, and contrary to the design of the writer, such a reading is doubtless not genuine. But great caution should be used, not to decide too hastily against a difficult reading, that it will bear no sense, and ought therefore to be expunged. Nor is it ever to be considered as a full evidence of the genuineness of a reading, that the sense of it is true. The thing itself may be true, and yet the writer may not have committed that truth to writing.

SECTION XX.

The manuscripts are the best authorities for a reading.

THE Manuscripts of the New Testament are the purest fountain, from which the true and genuine reading must be drawn. All printed editions are either taken from former editions or from manuscripts, and they have no farther authority, than as they correspond to the manuscripts from which they derive. It is plain that by the manuscripts of the New Testament, I mean only those which are prior in date to the invention of printing; and that those manuscripts which are transcripts from printed editions are foreign to our purpose. Such is that called the Codex Berolinensis, or Ravianus, in which is the text, 1 John v. 7. which manuscript is plainly of a later date than the art of printing, and a mere copy of the edition of the Bible printed at Alcala.

As it is indispensably necessary towards determining among the various readings, and even towards understanding

standing the books which treat of them, to have some account of the manuscripts, I shall here deliver a short list of them. It will be necessary to enlarge upon the principal of them, such as the Vatican and Alexandrine; for the rest I shall refer only to those learned men who have treated of them more at large*. I shall call them by their Latin names for the convenience of the reader, because the writings in which they are mentioned are chiefly Latin. I shall also name those manuscripts which have not yet been examined and made use of, and shall distinguish them thus §. It is much to be wished, that these hitherto hidden treasures may some time be applied to the good of the church, and to the establishment of the true reading of the New Testament.

SECTION XXI.

The Codex Vaticanus.

THE Codex Vaticanus, or Romanus, † contains the whole Bible, both Old and New Testament, in Greek. It is esteemed by the learned an inestimable remain of the earliest antiquity. Erasmus endeavours to depreciate it, by not admitting it to be above an hundred years old.

Milne

* Du Pin in Dissert. prælimin. ad biblia S. tom. II. 3. Rich. Simon in his Dissert. sur les principaux Manuscrits du Nov. Testam. which is an appendix to the third part of his historie critique du Nov. Testam. Milne and Kuster in Prolegom. to their edition of the New Testament, and Pfaff in his Dissert. de variis lectionibus Nov. Testam. These give the best accounts of those manuscripts, which have hitherto been used, and compared with the text of printed editions.

† Of this manuscript see Milne's Prolegomena, Pfaff's dissert. de var. lect. Nov. Testam. and particularly Hichtel's exercitatio critica de antiquitate et præstantia codicis Romani præ Alexandrino, printed at Jena in 1784.

Milne, in his Prolegomena, and Grabe, in the preface to his edition of the Septuagint, bring another charge against it. They charge it with having corrected or corrupted the text of the New Testament from the old Latin version, commonly called the Italic. It is in fact no disgrace to this manuscript, that it approaches so nearly to that ancient and excellent version; nor does this prove it to have been corrupted from that version, since both that version and this manuscript have, in most instances, preserved the true and genuine reading of the New Testament, and are less interpolated than other versions and manuscripts.

It is written in the same characters which we find upon the column of Hippolitus, who lived in the third century. Another argument of its antiquity is, that the four gospels are not divided according to the Eusebian canon, but only by red figures in the margin. All the epistles of St Paul are written without any interruption, and divided into ninety-three chapters. The epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude, are placed before those of Paul, and the epistle to the Hebrews is placed after the second to the Thessalonians, which according to the testimony of Epiphanius*, was the custom of the fourth century.

This manuscript has done all that could be expected from it, and it is merely owing to its antiquity that it is of no farther use. Lucas Burgensis, one of those learned men who assisted in the publication of the *Biblia regia* at Antwerp, gives an extract of the readings of this manuscript, in his Note in *S. Biblia, quibus variantia discrepantibus exemplaribus loco discutiuntur*, Antwerp, 1580. The Vatican edition of the Septuagint is also taken from this manuscript.

I.

* Hieron. 42. p. 37.

It is greatly to be lamented, that by length of time the end of the epistle to the Hebrews, all the pastoral epistles, and the revelation of St John, have been lost. The other books are so decayed, that it has been found necessary to draw fresh ink over the letters; but the manuscript in its present state has lost much of its credit by this, the persons employed in the work having sometimes not confined themselves to the old letters, but placed others in their room.

SECTION XXII.

The Codex Alexandrinus.

CYLIRUS LUCARIS, who was a Greek Patriarch of Constantinople in the last century, has merited immortal honour, both from the church and the learned world, by delivering the manuscripts of the New Testament which he had brought with him from Alexandria *, to Sir Thomas Roe, ambassador from Charles the first, as a present to the king of England.

* Of the Codex Alexandrinus, see Milne's Prolegomena, Grabe's notitia codicis Alexandrini, and Lee's notitia cod. Alex. both which pieces relate chiefly to the text of the Old Testament, but are of great use towards forming a right judgment of the antiquity of the Alexandrian manuscript. They may be seen in Breitinger's Septuagint. Casimer Oudin published at Leiden in 1717. Fria's dissertationum criticarum, against Grabe's notitia. It was written merely to serve the turn of a bookseller, and by depreciating the Alexandrian manuscript to forward the sale of Bos's Septuagint, which followed or pretended to follow the Roman copy. Hicetel sides with Oudin. But Schulze in 1739, published at Hall, his dissertation, qua antiquitas cod. Alex. vindicatur, et novo argumento confirmatur. Bengelius in his Adparatus Criticus, sect. 32. obs. x. xi. xii. gives us, in his usual manner of advancing something new and useful, some choice remarks upon this valuable manuscript.

It consists of four volumes, containing the Old and New Testament, except the first twenty-four chapters of St Matthew, and the five first verses of the twenty-sixth; likewise John vi. ver. 50. to viii. 52. and 2 Cor. iv. 10. to 12. 7. It has neither accent nor aspiration, and very few abbreviations of words. There is no vacant space between the words. Sometimes the sense of a passage is terminated by a point, sometimes by a blank space; but it is frequently manifest on this occasion, that the copyist did not understand Greek, for the concluding mark of a period is sometimes placed in the middle of a word. Some lines from this beautiful manuscript are exhibited in copper-plate, in Grabe's Prolegom. and in Rogal's Dissert. de auctoritate interpunctionis cod. S. Nov. Testam.

Cyrillus Lucaris gives the following account of this valuable piece: "We know this by oral tradition, of this manuscript of the Old and New Testament, that Thecla, an Egyptian lady of distinction, transcribed it with her own hand, upwards of 1000 years ago. She lived not long after the Council of Nice. Her name was heretofore at the end of the book. But when Christianity was subverted in Egypt by the errors of Mohammed, the books of Christians were likewise persecuted; and by this means the name of Thecla was expunged. However, it has been transmitted to us by oral tradition." Agreeably to this account, we find written, though by a later hand, upon this code, in Arabic; "It is reported, that Thecla wrote this book with her own hand."

We have no ground to ascribe it to Thecla who was cotemporary with St Paul, and died a martyr. It seems rather to have been the work of that Thecla to whom Gregory Nazianzen wrote three letters, Number 200, 201, 202. See the first part of his works. Grabe shews pretty clearly, that she presided in a convent at Seleucia.

The state of the Alexandrine manuscript corresponds with this account. It appears plainly to have been written by a female hand. The frequent changes of E for A, and of I for H, Y, EI, OI, are grounds sufficient for the conjecture. It appears likewise to have been written after the Council of Nice. That it is not more ancient than that celebrated Council, appears from the letter of Athanasius to Marcellinus, which is placed at the end of the Psalms. But as St Paul's epistles are not divided into chapters, it must have been written before the year of Christ 396, that division having been introduced in that year. And as it places among the canonical books the epistle of Clemens, bishop of Rome, which was read in the primitive church, the date of this manuscript must have been prior to the year 364, in which year the Council of Laodicea struck that epistle out of the Bible.

Some Greek copies of the New Testament having been altered or corrupted from the Latin version, a suspicion of the same kind has been thrown out against the Alexandrine manuscript; but Bengelius in his *Adparatus criticus* fully vindicates it from the charge.

Grotius in his *Adnot. Nov. Testam.* and Alexander Hunsius in the sixth part of Walton's *Polyglot Bible* give us an imperfect extract of the readings of this manuscript, which are delivered more fully in Milne's *New Testament*.

SECTION XXIII.

Italian manuscripts of the Greek Testament.

I SHALL enumerate as many of the other manuscripts as have fallen within my knowledge, in the order of the countries in which these treasures of antiquity are preserved.

I begin with Italy. Pfaff in his *Dissert. de var. lect. Nov. Testam.* and Montfaucon in his *Diarium Italicum*, have drawn up the most authentic accounts of the Italian manuscripts of the New Testament, adding withall a presumption, that the Libraries of Italy still contain many an unknown treasure of the kind. They mention the following :

1. The four gospels of the tenth century, in the Ambrosian library at Milan. See Montfaucon's *Diar. Ital.* p. 11.

2. Another Manuscript of the four gospels of the same age; and

3. The epistles of St Paul, of the eleventh century; *ibid.* These two are mentioned by Pfaff from Montfaucon's *Diarium*; but I am doubtful, whether they are not copies of the Latin version, as Montfaucon doth not mention their being written in Greek.

4. The four gospels, of the eleventh century, in the library of the Duke of Modena, p. 31.

5. The four gospels of the eighth century, in the same library, p. 31.

6. The Acts of the Apostles of the ninth century, in the same, p. 31.

7. The whole New Testament of the eleventh century, in the library of the Grimani at Venice, p. 39.

8, 9. Two manuscripts of the four gospels of the twelfth century, at Rome in the Convent of S. Basil, p. 212.

10. The Acts of the Apostles, copied in the year 1394, in the library of the family of Chiggi, at Rome, p. 237.

11—15. Five manuscripts of the gospels, one of the eighth, and two of the eleventh century, in the library of the monastery of S. John de Carbonaria at Naples, p. 307, 308.

16. The Acts of the Apostles, in the same, p. 308.

17. The Acts, and St Paul's epistles, with Greek expostitions,

sions, copied in the year 984, by one Theophylact; in the library of the Benedictines of St Mary at Florence, p. 362. In the same library are also the three following manuscripts:

18. The whole New Testament of 1338.

19. The four gospels of the tenth century, *ibid.*

20. The epistles and gospels of the eleventh century, *ibid.*

21. The whole New Testament of the eleventh century, at Bononia, 407.

So that sixteen of these manuscripts contain the gospels; seven, the Acts of the Apostles; five the epistles of St Paul; and only those of the whole New Testament, have the Revelation of St John. They are all, to the best of our knowledge, treasures not yet applied to any use.

But Pope Urban VIII. employed Jo. Mat. Caryophilus to examine and collate with the Biblia regia and the Latin Vulgate, two and twenty manuscripts; ten of the gospels, eight of the epistles and the acts, and four of the Revelation of St John. He intended a new edition of the New Testament, but the design was dropt. The readings, however, which had been collected were published at Rome, with this title; “*Collationes Græci contextus omnium librorum Nov. Testam. Juxta edit. Antwerp. regiam cum 22 antiquis manuscript. ex bibliotheca Barberina.*” Pet. Possinus annexed these Collations to his “*Catenæ in Marcum.*” It is not precisely known what manuscripts these were, and where they are now to be found. One would conclude from the title, that they were in the Barberini library, and when they are cited with an abbreviation, they are called only Barb. *i. e.* *codicis Barberini.* But Caryophilus, in the introduction of the Collations, expressly says, that “*ancient manuscripts were collected together, chiefly from the Vatican, and the other great libraries in Rome.*” It is therefore

therefore the general opinion, that the Vatican manuscripts mentioned above, Sect. 21. was one of them. But this appears improbable to me, since this manuscript contains the gospels and the epistles, which seems not to be the case of any Barberini manuscripts, and these would besides, be then reduced to one and twenty. It is pity, however, that Caryophilus pointed out only some readings of these manuscripts, and did not clearly point out by what manuscripts each reading is supported*.

SECTION XXIV.

German manuscripts of the New Testament.

I TURN from Italy to Germany, where we find,

1. Codex Carpzovianus, containing the four gospels, and supposed to be 600 years old. It was in the collection of M. Carpzovius at Leipzig. M. Boerner made extracts from it, and Kuster inserted them in his edition of the New Testament. See his preface to his New Testament.

2. Codex Boernerianus belongs to the celebrated M. Boerner Leipzig, and contains all St Paul's epistles with a Latin version, which is thought to be the Italic version. It seems to have been copied from some other good manuscript, which had no other fault than this, that the transcriber had sometimes altered the text from the Latin version; but the transcriber of this has, through ignorance, committed many errors. Kuster gives the various readings of this manuscript in his New Testament, and an account of it in his preface.

E 2

3. Codex

* See R. Simon's dissert. crit. sur les manuscript. du Nov. Testam. Milne's Prolegom. and Bengelii Adparatus criticus.

3. Codex Seidelianus was brought to Berlin from Greece by M. Seidel. It contains the acts of the Apostles, all St Paul's epistles, and the Revelation of St John, and is thought to be 700 years old. See the various readings, and an account of it in Kuster.

4. § Codex Eschenbachianus is a manuscript of the whole New Testament, except only the Revelation of St John. The age of it is unknown, but it is known to have been revised by one Joasaph in the year 1391. Joasaph, besides the chapters and decorations, added also the story of the adulteress, John viii. M. Ebner of Nurnberg has already caused it to be collated with six other manuscripts, with a design of having it accurately printed, with the addition of the various readings of those manuscripts. See an entertaining account of it in Schoenleben's *Notitia egregii codicis manuscripti. Nov. Testam. quem Norimbergæ servat. Hieron. Gul. Ebner ab Eschenbach. Norimb. 1738.*

5. § Vindobonensis primus, or a copy of the whole Bible, both Old and New Testament, in Greek, which was bought at Constantinople by Angerius Busbeck. See Lambecii *bibleoth. Vindobon. T. iii. p. 1.*

6. Vindobonensis vicesimus octavus belonged heretofore to Andr. Conterari, and contains the whole New Testament, which he has decorated with paintings. It is not written, as Milne observes, with what are called *literæ unciales*, but with small Greek letters, which seem to belong to the tenth century. Gerard of Maëstricht has collected the readings of it, and Milne, who obtained them without his knowledge from a third hand, first inserted them in his edition of the New Testament. See Lambecii *biblioth. Vind. T. iii. p. 41. Ger. a Maëstricht prolegom. ad Nov. Testam. Sect. 43. and Pfaff diss. de var. lect. Nov. Testam. c. iv. Sect. 9.*

7. § Vindobonensis vicesimus nonus contains only the gospels, and did formerly belong to the library of Ma

thias Corvinus, the famous king of Hungary. Lambecius is fuller in his account of this, than of other manuscripts, in the third part of his bibleoth. vindob. p. 41—47.

8. § Vindobonensis tricesimus is said to be very ancient, and contains the four gospels. See Lamb. p. 47.

9. § Vindobonensis tricesimus primus contains likewise the four gospels; is very ancient, and so carefully copied, that at the end of each gospel is an account of the number of lines and words, Lamb. p. 47.

§ 10. Vindobonensis tricesimus secundus contains the four gospels, p. 48.

11. § Vindobonensis tricesimus tertius contains the four gospels, from the library of Mat. Corvinus. It is written in very small characters, p. 48.

12. § Vindobonensis tricesimus quartus did formerly belong to Arsenius Bishop of Monembasia. It contains the Acts, all the epistles, and the Revelation of St John, together with a Greek exposition, which hath not yet appeared in print. Lambecius gives a full account of it, p. 48—57.

13. § Vindobonensis tricesimus quintus contains the Acts and all the epistles of the New Testament.

14. § Vindobonensis tricesimus sextus, the same.

15. § Vindobonensis tricesimus septimus, contains the same books, and was transcribed at Constantinople, in the year 1331. It is pity that Lambecius gives such an account of these manuscripts, as if he knew not what sort of an account the sensible reader would expect from him. For whoever would make a right use of these treasures, will hardly waste his time upon pictures and golden letters, or expositions which neither have been, nor perhaps deserve to be, committed to the press; but he will desire to know, in some instances, the various readings of the manuscripts; upon which head Lambecius is totally silent.

16. § Codex Gothanus, contains the Evangelistarium. M. Eschenbach promised ten years ago to present the learned with the various readings of this manuscript. See Cypriani catalog. bibleoth. Gothanæ, p. 43.

17. 18. 19. § Codices Augustani, are three ancient copies of Augsberg, one of the four gospels; the second, of a part of the gospels of Matthew and Mark, and the third of the portions of the gospels appointed to be read on Sundays. The learned world has the same claim upon M. Eschenbach, with respect to these manuscripts, as the former.

It appears from Bengelius's introduction in *crisin Nov. Testam.* that there are at Augsberg besides these, the following:

20. A copy of the ten last chapters of the Epistle to the Romans;

21. The Acts and all the epistles;

22. A Codex Papyraceus of the Revelation of St John; and,

23. Some leaves of the four gospels. Bengelius made use of all these manuscripts in his *Adparatus criticus*.

24. Codex Gehlianus contains the four gospels, and was written in the year 1006. M. Eschenbach has likewise promised to compare this manuscript with his own. See Gehlii *descriptio codicis manuscripti. quator evangeliorum*. Lips. 1729.

25—27. Three manuscripts of the gospels at Basil. Bengelius has given some extracts from these, in his *Adparatus criticus*, and an account of them, p. 450. 451. Erasmus had formerly made use of them.

28. There was formerly a manuscript of the Revelation of St John at Basil, which Erasmus likewise made use of, and highly commends; but is lost. See Bengeli *Adparat. crit.* p. 785. However the edition of the Revelation published by Erasmus, is not to be considered as

a transcript of this manuscript. Bengelius conjectures that it was in some places illegible, and that Erasmus supplied those places, by translating those parts of the Latin Vulgate into Greek, which is confirmed by Erasmus himself, at the end of his New Testament. I have at present but an imperfect copy of this edition, but remember to have read his words in the library of M. Kapp.

29. 30. There are at Basil two other manuscripts of the Acts and the epistles, of pretty ancient date.

31. Codex Hirsigavensis, of the gospel of St John, has been made use of by Bengelius. See his Adparat. crit. p. 379.

32. Codex Boeclerianus, which was the property of M. Boecler at Strasburg, contains the Acts and all the epistles. See an account of it in Pfaffii dissert. de var. lect. Nov. Testam. p. 87. It was formerly purchased at Constantinople, and hath not yet been made use of.

33. Codex Uffenbachianus primus, contains a part of the epistle to the Hebrews. Bengelius thinks it would be of inestimable value, had it been preserved entire.

34. Uffenbachianus secundus, contains the whole New Testament, except only the gospels. It is faulty in frequent omissions, but is not chargeable with interpolations.

35. Uffenbachianus tertius is not very ancient, and contains the gospel of St John.

See an account of these manuscripts in the Bibliotheca Uffenbachiana, and their various readings in Bengelius's Adparatus criticus.

36. 37. Codices Wolfiani, are two copies of the four gospels, which M. Seidel brought with him from Turkey, and which seem to be of the eighth century. The celebrated Wolf of Hamburg, who was the last possessor, gives an account of them, in the preface to the third part

part of his *Anecd. Græc.* and some extracts of their readings, p. 48-----92. He bequeathed them, along with his curious collection of books, to the city of Hamburg.

38. *Codex Berolinensis* is of no great value. Bengelius observes, that it is transcribed verbatim, even including typographical errors, from the *Complutensian Polyglot*, and appeals to the *bibliothèque Angloise*, T. viii. p. 2. art. 7. and to the *prolegomena* of Westein's *New Testament*.

SECTION XXV.

English Manuscripts.

THE English manuscripts have been hitherto the most consulted and the best known. Besides the *Alexandrine*, great use have been made of the following;

1. 2. *Codex primus et secundus Bodleianus*, containing the four gospels. See an account of them in *Milne's Prolegom.*

3. 4. *Bodleianus tertius et quartus*, are two *Lectionaria*, or church books, out of which the usual and stated passages of the gospels were read to the congregation. See *Milne's Proleg.* who also gives an account of those *Lectionaria*.

5. *Bodleianus quintus* is a more modern *Lectionarium*.

6. *Bodl. sextus* contains the four gospels.

7. *Bodl. septimus* likewise contains the four gospels.

8. *Baroccianus* begins with *Acts xi. 13.* and contains all the epistles of St Paul, and the other Apostles, and the nineteen first chapters of the *Revelation* of St John.

9. *Trethini Codex*, which is also in the *Bodleian library*, contains the gospel of St John fairly transcribed, by the Abbot John Trithemius.

10. 11. Codices Roenses are two manuscripts, one of the gospels, the other of the epistles, brought from Turkey by Sir Thomas Roe, and presented by him to that library.

12.—16. Codices Laudani were presented to the same library by Archbishop Laudner. The first and fifth contain the gospels; the fourth is a *Lectio-narium*; the second contains the whole New Testament, except the Revelation of St John; and the third is only the Acts of the Apostles.

17.—21. Codices Seldiniani were, agreeable to Mr Selden's will, deposited in the Bodleian library. They are three copies of the four gospels, and two *Lectio-aria*.

22. *Lincolniensis primus* is a pretty modern copy of the gospels; and

23. *Lincolniensis secundus* is an ancient manuscript of the Acts and epistles. Both are in Lincoln College.

24. Magd. 1. is in Magdalen College, Oxford, and contains the whole New Testament, except only the Revelation of St John. It is in very high esteem.

25. Magd. 2. contains the epistles to the Romans and Corinthians.

26.—28. Codices Collegii Novi, are in New College Oxford. The first of them contains the four gospels; the second, the Acts and Catholic epistles, and is a beautiful manuscript; the third has the acts and all the epistles.

29. The next in order to be mentioned is the famous *Codex Cantabrigiensis*, which has excited very great attention. It contains the gospels and the Acts, together with an ancient Latin version. Beza presented it to the University of Cambridge. It is thought, upon good grounds, that the Greek in this manuscript hath been corrupted from the Latin version. See an account of it

it in Milne, Dupin's *diff. préliminaire sur le Nov. Testament*, and Michaelis *tractatio critica de var. lectio Nov. Testamenti*.

30. *Cantabrigienfis secundus* is in Christ's College, Cambridge, and contains the Acts, the epistle of St James, the first of St Peter, those of St John and Jude, and St Paul's to the Hebrews. It is judged to be about six hundred years old.

31. *Cantabrigienfis tertius*, which is sometimes called *Usserianus secundus*, and sometimes *Em.* because it is preserved in Emanuel College, contains all the epistles nearly, but inaccurately written; so that nothing can be concluded from the omissions of it.

32. *Gonu.* is the abbreviated name of a manuscript of the Gospels preserved in Caius College, Cambridge.

33. There is another good and ancient copy of the epistles, but very much damaged, in Emanuel College.

34. *Montfortianus* was heretofore the property of Thomas Montfort. It contains the whole New Testament, but is an indifferent copy.

35. In the Archbishop's library at Lambeth, is a copy of the gospels, preserved ever since the year 1160.

36. 37. *Huntingtonianus primus et secundus*. The first of these contains the Acts, epistles, and Revelation; the second, the gospels. Both are ancient and useful, but Robert Huntington brought them with him from Turkey, and permitted Doctor Milne to make use of them.

38—40. *Wheeleriani*. The two first contain, each the four gospels, the third is a *Lectio-narium*.

41. *Galeanus*. This manuscript was lent to Doctor Milne, by Thomas Gale.

42—46. *Coueliani quinque*. The first contains the four gospels; the second the Acts, the epistles, and the Revelation; the third and fourth, the Acts and epistles; the fifth, which is also called *Sinaiticus*, because it came from

from Mount Sinai, contains the Acts, the epistles, and Revelation; but it is illegible almost throughout.

47. Leicestriensis begins at Mat. xviii. 15. and ends at Rev. xx.

48. Bunckliensis contains the gospels, and is very modern.

49. 50. Codices Mori. The first connects the gospels with the Revelation, and was written in the year 1297; the second is somewhat more ancient, and is a Lectionarium. They were in the possession of Bishop More of Ely.

52. Codex Usserianus primus contains the gospels.

See an account of all the above manuscripts in Milne's Prolegomena. There may possibly be more of these treasures concealed in England, of which we have yet no account; but all that are here mentioned were made use of by Doctor Milne, though some more than others.

SECTION XXVI

Manuscripts of the New Testament in France.

WE come next to France, where the first that claim our attention, are the

1—14. Codices Stephanici, which are manuscripts made use of by Robert Stephens in his edition of the New Testament. I omit his two first marks of reference (α) and (β) the former being no manuscript, but the Bible published at Alcala; and the latter being a manuscript in Italy, which has probably been corrupted from the Latin version, and is therefore of small value. The rest are in the King of France's library, viz.

1.) The four gospels.

2.) The whole New Testament, except the Revelation of St John.

3.) Contains

1.) Contains the same books, agrees exactly with (2.) and seems not to have been examined with sufficient care.

2.) The four gospels. Stephens followed this manuscript very closely.

3.) The whole New Testament without the Revelation.

4.) The gospels and Acts.

5.) The whole New Testament without the Revelation.

This is a beautiful manuscript, of which Stephens made use almost throughout.

6.) A broken manuscript, containing an imperfect copy of the gospels, but a more perfect one of the Acts and epistles.

7.) Some leaves from each of the three parts of the New Testament.

8.) The four gospels, and a part of the 15th chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians.

9.) The Acts and all the epistles.

10.) The gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John.

11.) More fragments.—See an account of all in Milne.

It would be worth while to give a more particular account of these manuscripts. Whoever reads Dr Milne will find, that Stephens reckoned among the last manuscripts, various fragments from the midst of other books of the New Testament. It reflects some disgrace upon the French nation, that we are indebted for the only useful account we have of these manuscripts, to an Englishman, who would have rendered them yet more useful, had he resided in France, and had them in his own hands. It is pity F. Simon did not give a fuller account of them; and Dupin might have filled many pages in his *Prolegomenes sur la Bible*, much more to his reader's benefit in describing these, than in acquainting us, as he often does very agreeably, with what we all know already.

15. Codex Claromontanus was formerly the property of Beza, and after various adventures found its way into the King of France's library. It contains St Paul's epistles with a very ancient Latin version, and is the second half of the Cod. Cantabrigiæ. I. mentioned before, sect. 25. N. 29. Besides the books there referred to concerning this manuscript, see Piaff de variis lect. pag. 77.

16. Codex Perronianus contains the gospels, copied in the tenth century. See an account of all these manuscripts in Milne.

Piaff in his *desert. c. iv. sect. 7, 8.* gives so clear and exact a detail of the other treasures of this kind in France, with references to further accounts of each, that it would be transcribing from him to subjoin a short catalogue of them.

SECTION XXVII.

Manuscripts in other countries.

THERE being grounds to imagine that some manuscripts of the New Testament are still concealed, it is much to be wished that they were produced from under the dust and worms which cover them. They are chiefly to be sought for in Greece and Turkey, as in their natural soil; and learned travellers, who shall hereafter visit those countries, would do considerable service to Christianity, by rescuing such manuscripts of the New Testament from destruction. As criticism is so far from being in a flourishing state in Greece, that a dark ignorance overspreads that once enlightened nation, we may suppose them disqualified from imposing upon us spurious manuscripts, of pretended antiquity. With respect to Spain, see sect. 32. N. 9.

At Presburg, in Hungary, is preserved the Codex Byzantinus of the four gospels, with golden initial letters,

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F

beautiful

beautiful pictures, and silk leaves between the parchment, in order to preserve the writing. It appears from the subscription to have been bought by the Emperor Alexius Comnenus the Second, in the year of Christ 1183.

A very ancient manuscript of the four gospels is kept at Moscow, which reaches as far as the sixth chapter of St John. But the fifteen last chapters are written by a later hand, in the Grecian year 6508, *i. e.* in the year of Christ 1000, as appears from the subscription. Theophanes, Archbishop of Novogrod, permitted Bulfinger to examine this manuscript; and Grosse made extracts from it, which he published in Leusden's edition of the New Testament. The readings of it are frequently quoted by Bengelius, who delivers the following judgment of it in his *Adparatus criticus*, p. 377. "As
 " the former part of it is very ancient, and the more
 " modern part is copied from an ancient manuscript,
 " and it doth notwithstanding not agree exactly with
 " any of our manuscripts, it adds the greater weight to
 " any reading with which it agrees, and deserves to be
 " highly estimated."

SECTION XXVIII.

Some useful divisions of these manuscripts.

ALL manuscripts of the New Testament are not of equal weight, and in collecting their voices, it is not always expedient to decide in favour of that reading, which is supported by the majority.

Some are written with great accuracy, others negligently, and these last are commonly discovered by their frequent omissions, or by their substituting words of a similar sound and signification, in the room of others, which are sufficiently warranted by the other manuscripts.

These

These have lost their credit, in all points relating to omitted words and lines, or to synonymous words. On the other hand, those manuscripts are in this case of the greatest authority, in which it appears from orthographical errors, that the transcribers were ignorant of the Greek, and so were not qualified to commit errors of the other kind.

Some manuscripts in all cases retain the reading, which is exposed to fewest difficulties, or they insert some words and lines, which are omitted in the other authentic copies. It is easily seen, that those were transcribed by some conceited copyist, who took upon him sometimes to alter the text. Hence they have justly forfeited the right of voting in all questions, which concern various readings of that kind.

Some copyists in particular have altered the Greek text from the Latin version; and this is the common blemish of all those copies, to which the Latin version is annexed, and which are called *Codices Græco Latini*. The merit of these manuscripts has been the subject of much controversy between some zealots of the church of Rome, and the sound critics, both in that church and ours. Our church justly denies their authority, whenever the question concerns those various readings, of which one agrees with the Latin version, for, not to mention, that the authority of the original text is superior to that of the translation, and that the ancient church of Rome herself confesses the Latin version to have been corrupted; these manuscripts are, in some capital passages, opposed by the general voice of the other manuscripts and versions. See Simon *histoire critique du texte du Nov. Testam.* cap. xxx—xxxii. and his whole *Dissertation critique sur les manusc. du Nov. Testam.* besides the writers before referred to in the *Cod. Cantbr. 1.* and the *Cod. Claromontanus*, and *Michaelis tractatio de variis lectionibus*

nibus Nov. Testam. § 80—98. where this controversy is discussed at large.

It must be observed in the last place, that some copies approach nearer to each other than others, and have many readings in common. As these were probably transcripts from some one more ancient copy, they can have no more than the weight of one voice, in those readings, in which they agree. The shortest, but most useful observations upon this subject, see in Bengelii introductio in crisin Nov. Testam. I wish my readers may peruse him. I never quote this excellent writer, without admiring the abilities, which have exalted him so much above all his predecessors in the critical knowledge of the New Testament.

SECTION XXIX.

Of the Ancient Versions.

THE next fountain, from which we are to derive the genuine readings of the New Testament, is in the ancient versions. We shall consider them particularly hereafter; but must here lay down some general observations upon them.

In those readings, in which either the sense remains intirely the same, or in which the translator might possibly consider both readings as equivalent, the authority of the Greek copies is justly preferable to that of the translations. The case is the same with all those various readings, in which the translator might consider some words as trifles, and so omit them; or in which the text being difficult, the translator did not understand it, and therefore either omitted it, or made some arbitrary alteration of his own.

There are cases on the other hand, in which the versions are preferable to copies of the original; especially the

the Syriac and Latin version. For as these are more ancient than the most ancient Greek manuscripts we have, they evidence the readings of those more ancient manuscripts from which they were translated. Whenever it can be fully ascertained from the version, what was the reading in the manuscript used by the translator, then his reading is of the same weight, as if it stood in a manuscript of his age. But there are impediments to our attainment of this certainty, and it requires therefore the utmost caution in collecting readings from the versions; of which see Michaelis's tract. crit. de variis lection. Nov. Testam. § 37—48.

It is particularly necessary in the Oriental versions, to use great caution in not drawing readings from the subsequent Latin translations, which we find in the Polyglot. Dr Milne was frequently misled by this.

And as some versions have by length of time undergone alterations, we must take care not to put those alterations upon a level with the ancient version itself, nor to alledge in evidence of a reading.

It is moreover to be observed, that all translations are not from the original text, but from other versions. Such therefore have no right to a separate voice in determining the authenticity of the readings of the original text, since they only shew, what reading was expressed by the version, from which they are taken. For instance, all the Spanish, French and German translations of the New Testament of the sixteenth century were taken from the Latin version. If therefore all these should confirm one reading, yet their united voice would amount to no more than the single voice of the Latin version.

SECTION XXX.

Of the Fathers.

THE third source of various readings is contained in the writings of the fathers, who sometimes quote passages of the New Testament. But as they do not always quote the whole passage, but only some words, which served their purpose; as they sometimes interpolate a word in the passage they quote, by way of explanation; and as they, like other ancient writers, quote merely from memory, and therefore inaccurately, they are not much to be relied on, when the Greek manuscripts vary from their readings, and when they themselves do not attest, that they are quoting the passage verbatim. And even in this last case, it is not safe to follow them blindly, since their testimony amounts to no more than this, that some manuscripts of their time had the reading which they quote. But the judgment of the fathers is not at all decisive; for most of them were unacquainted with criticism, and apt to embrace that reading which best favoured their opinions in theology.

The Church of Rome is too much disposed to follow the fathers in the choice of readings in the New Testament. Dupin in his *Dissertation préliminaire sur la Bible* draws the false conclusion, that because the writings of the fathers are more ancient than all our manuscripts, therefore they are the purest and most genuine sources of various readings; without considering, that the ancients did not transcribe the passages they quote, but relied wholly upon their memories. See Bengelius's *Introd. in crit. Nov. Testam.* p. 389. Pfaff *de var. lect. Nov. Testam.* cap. viii. § 3. and Michaelis's *tract. crit. de var. lect. Nov. Testam.* § 13—19. who have treated this part of the subject more at large.

SECTION

SECTION XXXI.

Of critical Conjectures.

As we have so considerable a number of manuscripts of the New Testament, some of which are of so great antiquity, and written in parts of the world so remote from each other; and as the versions we have are so ancient, and so different, it appears incredible to me, that the true reading of any passage is totally lost. Can we suppose any passage to have been so unfortunate, as to be mistaken by all, both copyists and translators? I cannot therefore agree to the authority of a reading, which is not to be met with in any copy or version, but arose merely from the conjecture of a commentator, which is usually called a *critical conjecture* *. See an instance of this in Wolfii Curæ Philol. &c. upon Gal. iv. 17. and 24. and whoever desires to see critical temerity in the most impudent degree, let him consult the Socinian Crellius upon John i. 1. and Rom. ix. 5. I am not chargeable with superstition in this, for even they, who deny the divinity of the books of the New Testament, cannot in reason reject my opinion, since we should form the same judgment in the case of any prophane book, of which we had an equal number of copies and translations.

It would be yet more absurd, amidst so many manuscripts, from different parts of the world, and so many ancient versions, some of which were done by heretics, (for instance, the Gothic) to suspect, that the New Testament was totally corrupted by the reigning party, who assumed the name of Orthodox, inasmuch that we can

no

* The only exception to be admitted in favour of a mere critical conjecture is in the Revelation of St John, because we have so much fewer manuscripts of that book than of the rest.

no longer derive from it the true doctrine of Christ and his apostles. Surely some manuscripts, among so many, escaped the fire of the orthodox zealots, and the heretics, in their translations, would hardly have followed the corrupted copies of the prevailing party. There are still extant some old Latin versions, before Jerom corrected them from the Greek; it should seem, that these would discover some traces of the passages altered by the orthodox. But though they frequently depart from the genuine reading, they contain nothing particularly exceptionable in point of orthodoxy.

The passages, which have given offence to some of the orthodox, are still extant in our manuscripts, translations, and editions of the New Testament. On the contrary, the passage 1 John v. 7. in which the orthodox seem to have been most deeply interested, hath not had the good fortune to be inserted in one Greek manuscript, or in the Ethiopic, Arabic, Syriac, Coptic, Russian, or the old Armenian versions.

If the orthodox have irreparably corrupted the text, in all the copies and versions; if they have destroyed by fire all the genuine copies and versions, from the Indian Sea to the Pillars of Hercules, and from the extremities of Egypt to the coasts of Scotland, it will surely be admitted, that this was not the work of one man, but the work of a council, consisting of all the bishops of the Parthian and Roman empires. This great council, if it ever existed, could not be intirely unknown in history; the orthodox historians would have boasted of it, and have attributed to it the merit of having rescued the New Testament from the false readings of heretics. But we find not the least trace of a council, which determined and established the readings of the New Testament.

Credulity is a term of reproach among the free-thinkers of the age; but how *credulous* must the unbeliever be, who, amidst all these circumstances can persuade himself,
that

that the writings of the New Testament have been irreparably corrupted. See Dupin dissert. prelim. sur la Bible, l. ii. c. 3. and P. Simon hist. crit. du texte du Nov. Testam. c. 1.

SECTION XXXII.

Account of the Collaters and Examiners of the various readings.

WE come next to recite the names of those persons, who have deserved highly of the Christian church by collecting and adjudging the various readings of the New Testament. Simon in his hist. crit. du texte du Nov. Testam. c. 29. and in some parts of his hist. crit. des commentateurs; Milne in his Prolegomena; Pfaff in his diss. de var. lect. Nov. Testam. and Rumpæus in his Comm. crit. give an account of them.

1. Laurentius Valla, a learned Roman, who was born in 1417, and died in 1467, published in 1440 Annotationes in Nov. Testam. in which he collected the readings of three Greek and three Latin manuscripts, and took particular pains to amend the Latin version. The book was published at Paris in 1505, and gave occasion to the Complutensian Polyglot. As he was a novice in criticism, he gives too strong a preference to the Greek manuscripts, and frequently censures the Latin version in instances, in which it is more correct. See P. Simon, Milne and Rumpæus. Dr Milne held the labours of this man in such contempt, that he would not allow them a place in his New Testament, for which Bengelius censures him in his Introd. in crisin Nov. Testam. p. 437. See Valla's Annotations in the sixth and seventh volumes of the Critici Sacri.

2. We shall treat of Cardinal Ximenes, the editor of
the

the Complutensian Polyglot, in the following section, and of

3. Erasmus of Rotterdam.

4. Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, or Jacques le Fevre d'Estaples, a native of Estaples in Picardy, in the year 1512 collated five Greek manuscripts of St Paul's epistles. In 1521 he published *Comment. initiator. in evangelia*, and afterward in *epistolas catholicas*, in which he sometimes takes notice of the various readings. See P. Simon and Bengelius. Both he and Erasmus were answered by Jac. Lopez de Stunica, of which hereafter.

5. Robert Stephens, and

6. Beza, belong to the following section.

7. Franciscus Lucas Brugensis, who assisted in the Antwerp edition of the *Biblia regia*, was the first who made a regular collection of the various readings in the New Testament; for in the year 1606 he published *Comment. in quatuor Evangelia*, and annexed to them *Notæ ad varias lectiones editionis Græcæ Evangeliorum*. His diligence and sound judgment are highly extolled by the critics. See Milne's Proleg.

8. The miserable conjectures upon some readings of the New Testament published by Jos. Scaliger and Is. Casaubon, (men of eminence in other respects), in their notes upon the New Testament in the year 1622, are very little to their credit. See a true judgment of them in Milne, N. 1301.

9. Petrus Faxard, Marquis of Velez, collated sixteen Greek manuscripts, eight of which were in libraries in Spain, and eight in France, and extracted readings from them; but as they were no other than such as served to support the Latin version, and as he did not distinctly attribute each reading to its manuscript, his work is of very little merit or use. Mariana, into whose hands it fell, presented it to de la Cerda, who caused it to be printed in the ninety-first chapter of his *Adversaria sacra*.

Some

Some of these manuscripts seem to have been altered from the Latin version; for instance, in Luke x. 30, all the other Greek copies read *συλλαβων*, but as the Latin version, instead of *suscipiens*, renders it *suspiciens*, Velelius has *συμβαιεντων*. See Milne's prolegom. Bengelius's introd. in *crisin Nov. Testam.* and Michaelis de var. lect. *Nov. Testam.* sect. 89.

10. Of Caryophilus see above, sect. 23. N. 22.

11. Jo. Morinus, in his *exercitationes ecclesiasticæ et biblicæ*, undertakes to show, that the Greek text has been totally corrupted, and that therefore the Latin version is solely to be relied on, as having been made from the best readings. He insists upon very shallow arguments, such as the great variation of the Greek manuscripts, as if the Latin manuscripts did not vary as much. See Milne and Simon.

12. The immortal Hugo Grotius in his *Annot. in Nov. Testam.* frequently treats of various readings, and gives the first extracts from the Alexandrine manuscript, which extracts had been communicated to him by Junius. But it is greatly lamented, that this illustrious author had no Greek manuscripts in his own hands, which Milne judges to be highly probable from this circumstance, that Grotius, in tracing out this or that reading, often invents such abbreviations of Greek words, as are not used in any manuscripts. See Milne's Proleg.

13. The famous and excellent Archbishop Usher partly collated himself, and partly caused others to collate, fifteen manuscripts of the Greek Testament. These readings are inserted in Walton's Polyglot, but very imperfectly. Mr Tyrrell, the grandson of the archbishop, communicated his own work to Milne, who incorporated it more fully with his own edition of the New Testament.

14. Brian Walton, and

15. Fell, bishop of Oxford, will find a place in the next section.

16. 17. Jo. Saubert published at Helmstedt in the year 1672, his observations upon Matthew, in which he diligently considers the various readings. Simon commends him highly in his *hist. crit. du texte du Nov. Testam.* c. 29.

18. P. Dionysius Amelot in the year 1666 published a French translation of the New Testament, which is more fully described by Simon in his *hist. crit. des versions du Nov. Testam.* c. 32. and 33. To this translation he annexes those readings of the Greek manuscripts, which agree with the old Latin version; but he commits an offensive piece of vanity, and an impudent theft, by pretending in the preface, that he had himself collected these readings, whereas he only took them from Walton's *Polyglot*. Simon gives a narrative of this in his *hist. crit. du texte du Nov. Testam.* cap. 29. and observes, that the good father Amelot sometimes made a slip in transcribing. For instance, he often cites two manuscripts of Magdeburg College, Oxford, meaning those, of which see an account above, § 25. N. 24, 25.

19. Richard Simon has distinguished himself eminently with respect to the readings of the New Testament, in his *histoire critique du texte, des versions et des Commentateurs du Nov. Testam.* and by his translation, to which he has added various readings. His *histoire critique* discovers both extensive learning and a sound judgment, and it is at the same time an entertaining book.

20. Laurent. Alex. Zacagni published at Rome a collection of various readings, which Pfaff approves in his *dissert. de var. lect.* p. 112. and wonders that Dr Milne made no use of it.

21—24. Milne, Kuster, Mastricht, and Bengelius, will be considered in the next section.

25. The celebrated John Christopher Wolff made it part of his design in his *Curæ philologicæ et criticæ in Nov. Testam.* to treat of the various readings, and to confute

confute those, which depart without grounds, from the usual readings of the Greek additions. But I apprehend this learned writer often carried this too far, in a work in other respects useful and excellent. Sometimes he has nothing more to oppose to the many Greek manuscripts, than that the Apostle in other passages made use of that phrase or construction, which he chooses to defend; in which case it is probable, that one passage was corrupted from the other. He particularly contradicts Bengelius in the latter part of the *Curæ*, &c. but the truth seems generally to be on the side of that celebrated critic. In short, he was determined to vindicate the readings of the common editions of the Greek Testament, whenever he had the least to offer in their vindication.

26. Of Bentley see the next section.

27. *Christ. Benedict. Michaelis tractatio critica de variis lectionibus Nov. Testam. caute colligendus.* The author was my father, and if I may be permitted, without transgressing the bounds of decency, to confess the merits of his works, I am of opinion, that this treatise discusses the various readings very copiously and usefully; that he treats more fully and satisfactorily of those manuscripts which have been corrupted from the Latin version, than any other writer; and particularly, that he throws a new light upon the use of the oriental versions, in collecting and adjudging the various readings, and corrects many errors, which were unavoidable to Milne and others, because they could not read the oriental versions themselves, and so were obliged to rely upon the later Latin versions, which have been annexed to them in the Polyglot Bibles. Whoever is possessed of this work, and of Bengelius's *Adparatus criticus*, may dispense with the rest, unless he professes to study the New Testament critically.

SECTION XXXIII.

The principal editions of the New Testament.

NEXT to those, who have examined the readings of the New Testament, we must make honourable mention of those who have offered something new to the world, in the best and most considerable editions, for it would be a tedious labour to enumerate all the editions, which are mere copies from them.

1. The first in rank is the *Biblia polyglotta Complutensis*. We are indebted for it to the celebrated Cardinal, Statesman and General, Francis Ximenes de Cisneros, who published it at his own expence. Of this very famous and scarce edition, see Milne's proleg. Bengelius's introd. in *crisim Nov. Testam.* and Breitingen's proleg. to the first part of the Septuagint.

Cardinal Ximenes, Archbishop of Toledo, who commanded the Spanish armies so successfully against the Moors, under Ferdinand the Catholic, and administered the government of Spain for Charles the V. during the space of two years, with extraordinary dignity and prudence, has not the merit of any uncommon affection to the Bible. He rather opposed a design which was formed of translating it into Spanish for the conversion of the Saracens, judging it needless for that purpose. But he has notwithstanding, whilst the Christian church subsists, the merit of having promoted the first edition of the Polyglot.

The hands he made use of were, *Ælius Nebrissensis*, *Demetrius Cretensis*; *Ferdinandus Pintianus*, and *Lope de Stunica*. The Bible consists of six volumes in folio. The old Testament is in Hebrew, Latin, Greek, and Chaldee; the New, in Greek and Latin. In the Greek text

he made use of some manuscripts out of the Vatican, and particularly of an ancient one from the isle of Rhodes, and to retain the semblance of the original, he caused Greek types to be cast for the purpose, and printed it without accents.

Among the Vatican manuscripts was one very ancient, which the editors caused to be transcribed verbatim, and noted the various readings in the margin of their copy. They reserved to themselves the liberty of inserting these readings in the text, whenever they judged them preferable; but of this liberty they availed themselves very seldom. Hence Doctor Milne points out in his edition about an hundred readings which are not in any other manuscript; and he is of opinion that they have more genuine readings than other editors, who have taken the liberty to make a choice of the most trifling readings. Wetstein, however, is of a different opinion. He apprehends both this manuscript, and the rest that were made use of at Alcala, to have been forgeries; and *Rogal de auctoritate interpunctionis Nov. Testam.* seems to approach very near to his opinion.

The impression was finished in the year 1517, but it was not permitted to be publicly sold till the year 1524.

This edition has laid the foundation for all the succeeding ones; and Doctor Milne wishes the text had been constantly retained throughout with only a marginal mention of the various readings; for most of the succeeding editions have corrupted more than they have amended.

2. Before the Complutensian Polyglot appeared, Erasmus of Rotterdam published his edition of the Greek Testament with a Latin translation. He begun this work in the year 1513. He made use of the *Codices Basilenses*, and all that he could collect in his travels. In the Revelation of St John he made use of a very ancient manuscript, but in some passages illegible, which

had been communicated to him by Reuchlin. The illegible passages he filled by translating the Latin version into Greek. In his notes he particularly examines the Greek readings, which depart from the Latin version. He supervised five editions himself, in the years 1516, 1519, 1522, 1527, and 1535; the two last were altered in some passages from the Complutensian Polyglot. After his death, his New Testament was reprinted at Basil in 1553, 1558, Leipzig in 1582, at Frankfort, with various readings, in 1673, 1674, 1693, and with a preface by Schmid in 1700. See Milne's *Prolegom.* Bengelius's introd. in *crisin Nov. Testam.* and Simon's *hist. crit. des Versions, et des Commentateurs du Nov. Testam.*

His learning and labour did not exempt him from vehement adversaries. Not to mention the censures which the divines of the university of Paris passed against him, he was opposed with particular vehemence, by the learned Spaniard, Jacob Lopez Stunica, in his *annot. adversus Erasmus in defensione translationis Nov. Testam.* Erasmus vindicated himself, in some apologies, against him and other adversaries. Simon gives a full account of this controversy, which not only affected the readings, but the interpretation of the New Testament.

Some other editions of the New Testament which pass for rare and famous, are only copies from that of Erasmus. Such are,

a) The Greek Bible printed by Aldus Manutius at Venice, in 1518, which retained even the errors of the press; for instance, in Rev. vii. 14. Erasmus's edition, instead of *αὐτῶν*, for the catchword at the bottom of a page, has *αὐτᾶς*; in imitation of which, Manutius prints *ἐκδικαζάν τας σκολας ΑΤΤΑΣ αὐτῶν*. See Milne, N. 1122. It was reprinted at Basil in 1545.

b) The Greek Testament printed at Hagenau in the year 1521 by Nicolaus Gerbelius is a mere copy from

Erasmus

Erasmus and Manutius, with only the addition of some errors of the press. See Milne, N. 1136. Some attribute to this edition the honour of having been the original, from which Luther made his German translation. Tobias Eckard wrote a treatise to prove this, and was answered by Boyfen of Leipzig. It is a controversy of no great moment.

2) The edition published by Fabricius Capito at Strasburg, in the year 1524, differs from this of Hagenau in no more than eleven passages, one of which is only altered upon the authority of a critical conjecture. See Milne, N. 1139. Another Strasburg edition of the same year is only a copy of Aldus's.

3) Bebelius's edition at Basil, 1531, is a mere copy from Erasmus and Aldus. See Milne, N. 1142.

4) It was republished at Paris by Colinaeus, but with some alteration from the Complutensian, and from some manuscripts. He is suspected by some of having inserted his own conjectures in the text. See Milne, N. 1143--1149.

Robert Stephens in his famous Paris edition of 1546, was chiefly guided by the editions of Alcalá and Basil, but made use likewise of the manuscripts mentioned above, sect. 26. It is pity he did not remark all the readings of these manuscripts. He varies from the Complutensian Bible in 581 passages, and is in great measure the founder of those readings which are retained in our common editions of the New Testament. Whoever is blindly attached to these, is so to him. In 1549, he published the second impression, corrected in 77 places. In 1550 the third was most elegantly printed; the fourth in 1551, and the fifth by his son in 1569. See Milne and Bengelius. Vogel's edition at Leipzig in 1564, and Crispinus's at Geneva in 1553, are entirely copies of Stephens's.

4. Theodore Beza obtained from Henry Stephans, the use of his father's third edition of 1550, with many readings noted in the margin by Robert Stephans. Beza made use of these towards a new edition of the New Testament, which was first published in 1565, but frequently inserted in the text the readings which coincided with his opinions, even though they were authorised by no more than a single manuscript. His new Testament was printed a second time in 1576 by Henry Stephans, who prefixed to it his famous dissertation *de Stilo, lectionibus et interpunctionibus Nov. Testam.* Here are many variations in the readings.

In the year 1582 he published the third and most complete edition, and enriched it with many various readings from the *Codex Cantabrigiensis* and the *Codex Claramontanus*. To the Greek text he added, besides the vulgate, his own Latin translation and notes. It was reprinted once more, in 1589, and our common editions of the New Testament chiefly follow it.

See a further account of this work of Beza, in Simon's *Hist. crit. des Versions*, &c. Milne's *Prolegom.* and Bengelius's *Adparat. critic.* the last of which particularly shews how many editions of the New Testament have flowed from this. The most remarkable of these are those published by the Elzevirs, which follow Stephans and Beza in almost all the readings. The first was published at Leyden in 1624, the second in 1626; which last, and the Amsterdam edition of 1662, are reckoned the most beautiful of all the Elzevirs. Morinus, who endeavours, in his *Exercitationes Biblicæ* to render the whole text of the New Testament uncertain, and to refer us solely to the Latin version, followed the Elzevirs in his sumptuous edition of the New Testament printed at Paris in 1628. See Milne's *Proleg.*

Beza was attacked, both for his choice of readings and his comments, by Jo. Bois, Prebendary of Ely, in his
Collatio

Collatio in quatuor, Evangelia et acta veteris interpretis cum interpretis cum Beza, which learned work was written in 1625, but not made public till thirty years after. He justly defended the old Latin version in many places against the needless alterations of Beza. See some useful extracts from this book in Simon's Hist. des Versions, &c. and Milne's Proleg.

5. The edition printed by Wechelius at Francfort in 1597, is usually mentioned among these. Fred. Sylburgius added to it various readings, but some attribute these to Franc. Junius. This edition however produces nothing new. See Milne and Bengelius.

6. Stephan Curcellæus's New Testament was first printed by Elzevir in 1658, and afterwards reprinted in 1675, 1685, and 1699. He added the readings of two manuscripts, besides several, for which he was indebted to his predecessors. See Milne's Proleg. and Bengelius. Rumpaus in his Commentaria critica ad Novam. Testam. gives a further account of this edition, and charges it with some things, which are not perhaps perfectly well grounded.

7. The beautiful Polyglot, published at Paris, in nine volumes folio, contains indeed in the fifth volume, the Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Arabic, New Testament; but the Greek text in this Polyglot is not particularly preferable to other editions. The work, which deserves the principal place here, is

8. The famous Polyglot of Erian Walton, published at London in 1657. The fifth volume contains the New Testament, and besides the Greek text and Latin version, the Vulgate, the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, together with a Latin interpretation of these, a Persian translation of the Gospels, and under the Greek text some readings of the famous Alexandrine manuscripts. The sixth volume contains a large collection of various readings. It may be truly said of this edition, that

that it is indispensably necessary to those, whose profession it is to explain the scriptures, and that the old versions which are added to it will afford a divine more help in explaining the New Testament than most of the modern expositions. See in Milne's Proleg. a further account of the utility of this work towards ascertaining the readings of the New Testament.

9. Bishop Fell of Oxford in the year 1675 caused a sumptuous edition of the New Testament to be printed at the Theatre, and enriched it with various readings. It was reprinted at the same place in 1703, with the addition of notes from the Greek fathers by Grigory. See Milne's Prolegom. But this edition is eclipsed by that of Milne, and is now in little repute.

10. Doctor Milne has acquired lasting honour by his edition of the New Testament, as long as the words of Jesus Christ and his Apostles are revered by men of learning and sense in any part of the world.

He relates the occasion of his undertaking in his Prolegomena, N. 1413, and in the following pages he gives an account of his labour. He caused the third edition of Stephens to be reprinted, collected almost all the various readings, which were known before, increased them from manuscripts, from old versions, and from the writings of the Fathers, and printed them, together with his own judgment upon them, under the Greek text. His Prolegomena, to which we so often refer, are elegant, learned, and solid. The various readings, which he has collected, amount to 30,000. The first edition of his New Testament was printed at the Oxford Theatre in 1706.

So laborious a work as this could not be entirely unexceptionable. Bengelius in his introd. in crisin Nov Testam. p. 442, 443, most accurately points out the errors. But other writers have done him injustice, and made an ungrateful return for his astonishing diligence.

I will not repeat the names of his little conceited adversaries. Some reject the whole work: others censure him for being too minute in his various readings, which is rather a mark of his diligence, and may easily be passed over, by persons who are not qualified to avail themselves of his minutiae; others again charge him with treating the holy scriptures with an impious freedom. I must however mention the learned Dr Whitby. This able adversary of Milne, who often censures him justly, and often unjustly, published against him in the year 1724, his *examen variarum lectionum Millii in Nov. Testam.* which was afterwards annexed to his commentary upon the New Testament.

Ludolph Kuster improved upon Milne, by the addition of the readings of some manuscripts, and reprinted him at Amsterdam, in 1710.

The chief objection I have to Dr Milne is, that he often misquotes the oriental versions, or neglects to quote them, when they actually contain a various reading; because he did not himself understand those languages, and was obliged to have recourse to the Latin interpretation in the Polyglot. He is besides chargeable with frequently contradicting in his *Prolegomena* what he affirms in the various readings under the text. This however is not matter of wonder. He himself confesses, that during the progress of his work his judgment was much improved by Simon's *histoire critique*, which furnished him with a better knowledge of the ancient versions; and Bengelius observes, that Dr Milne at first formed his judgment upon the number, rather than the merits of the manuscripts, but afterward corrected it.

11. The New Testament of the learned Gerard of Mastricht, Syndic of the city of Bremen, was received with great applause in Germany. He first published it in the year 1711, with *Prolegomena*, and various readings,

ings, which he partly took from Bishop Fell's edition, and partly from a manuscript in the Imperial library, which he collated with great care. He styles himself upon the title page, G. D. T. M. D. i. e. Gerhardus de Trajectu Mosæ, Doctor. This edition was printed at Hall in 1740, in such manner, that, for the benefit of those who had been accustomed to the Bible of Canstein, every page exactly corresponds to the pages of that Bible.

Imperfect judges extol the labour of this man; but Bengelius in his introd. in crisin in Nov. Testam. p. 440. seems not to estimate it highly. Mastricht was unfortunate in his choice of readings, and his imperfect collection of various readings is become quite useless, since Milne has made so much better extracts from the manuscripts.

12. An anonymous author, in the year 1729, published at London, an edition of the New Testament in Greek and English. He ventured to alter many things in the Greek text, not only against the authority of ancient manuscripts before him, but merely upon his own conjecture. His English translation runs very well, and he added some notes. He takes for granted a principle, which we have controverted above, Sect. 31. that it is lawful for him to alter the text of the New Testament upon mere conjecture, and ridicules those who are afraid to invent a reading. For instance, in Gal. iv. 25, he cannot understand the common reading, perhaps merely through his own ignorance, and concludes, because it is obscure to him, it must therefore be unintelligible. He therefore alters it, and reads, το γὰρ Ἀγὰρ ἀνέκρινεν τὴν τοῦ Ἱερουσαλὴμ, *hæc enim Hagara respondet Hierosolymæ quæ nunc est*. The reader will observe, that το γὰρ, which he renders *this Agar*, are of different genders. As Dr Milne would not hazard this reading, nor omit the words

words, *Σὺ γὰρ οὐκ εἶπες ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ*, which are in all manuscripts, this author insults him with these ludicrous words, "As if there was any manuscript so old as common sense." But other writers have found a plain sense in the words in which he cannot discover any. In short, he is an ignorant conceited man, who seemed to have a strong desire of advancing something new, and to blame Providence for not having sent him into the world before his ancestors. The learned Wolfius frequently attacks this bold editor in his *Curæ*, &c. and Doctor Twell's wrote a piece against him.

13. The last edition I shall mention may justly be said to crown all the rest, and for the honour of Germany we owe it to a German, I mean Bengelius's Greek Testament published in quarto at Tubingen in 1734:

He has taken uncommon care to correct the Greek text; and to obviate all cavil, he inserts no reading in the text, however demonstrably genuine, which has not already appeared in one or more printed editions. To the New Testament he annexes his introduction in criticism Nov. Testam. a large abstract of the various readings, which he calls *Adparatus criticus*, and an epilogus. In the introd. in criticism Nov. Testam. we have the genuine principles of sound criticism. His various readings are indeed chiefly borrowed from Milne and Kuster, but he improves them by some additions of his own from several manuscripts, omits some minutiae, and subjoins short but judicious remarks. He is copious, learned, solid, and impartial, upon 1 John v. 7. and takes extraordinary pains in the Revelation of St John. I would earnestly recommend this edition to every divine, and indeed to every man of letters, who understands Greek. Whoever reads him will be fully convinced both of his judgment and learning, and will see strong marks of his upright intention; for he considers the judgment he is to form

form upon are adding of the New Testament as a point of conscience *.

SECTION XXXIV.

Two observations upon the printed editions.

WHOEVER would make a right use of this account of the several editions of the New Testament must take particular notice, how one edition derives its readings from another, and is as it were the daughter of the other. We have four capital editions, which have extracted their readings from the manuscripts themselves, that of Alcala, Erasmus, Stephans, and Beza. Although in the rest, manuscripts have been collated, yet the editors made little or no alteration in the text, except only the London edition of 1729, which merits no consideration.

Hence I would draw two observations, in opposition to the advocates for the common readings.

First; It cannot be truly affirmed, that our common editions have always chosen the best readings of those four capital editions. Stephans corrupted many good things in the Alcala edition; and Beza again altered some good things in Stephans, without sufficient grounds. As therefore our present Greek Testament is copied from his edition, we have no reason to esteem it as sacred. I am amazed when I hear some men vindicate our common readings,

* The author next gives an account of the controversy between Bentley and Middleton, on the subject of Bentley's proposals for an edition of the New Testament, which is so well known here that it appeared needless to translate it. He likewise bestows a page upon Wetstein's Prolegomena, which is of no use since the publication of that learned gentleman's edition of the New Testament in two volumes folio.

readings, with as much zeal, as if the editors had been inspired by the Holy Ghost. If the text of any edition is to be invariably retained, it has been already urged by other hands, that the edition of Alcala has the best claim to a preference. In short, "A reading is not therefore suspicious, because it doth not occur in the common editions."

Secondly; as the Protestants were, till the time of Beza, and some time after, unacquainted with the critical knowledge of the New Testament, and rather corrupted than amended the text, from some few, and those often but indifferent Greek manuscripts, by paying too little regard to the Latin version, as the best and most important manuscripts were not made use of at all till his time; and the rest were not consulted with sufficient care; and the oriental versions were hardly consulted at all, till his time; it follows that the true reading of some passages may possibly not exist in any of those capital editions, and consequently that it may not exist in any one printed copy. I therefore observe, that "A reading is not to be rejected, merely because it is not found in any one printed copy of the New Testament."

SECTION XXXV.

Of the points, and other distinctions of pause, among the Greeks.

HAVING thus acquainted ourselves with all the helps necessary towards determining the true and genuine reading of the New Testament, a question arises, Whether certain marks in the New Testament, which are not letters, belong to the readings of the New Testament; whether those notes or marks were used by the Apostles, and are to be received by us, whenever they are confirmed by sufficient manuscripts, and other critical helps?

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The marks we speak of, are those stops or points, which we call Comma, Colon, Full-stop, and Note of Interrogation; the Iota subscriptum, and the two Aspirations. If the Apostles themselves added these points to the words, we are bound to receive them, as they stand in some manuscripts, and in almost all the printed editions of the New Testament. But if they do not proceed from the Apostles, then no manuscripts, and no printed edition, will oblige us to receive them; they will be considered as explanations of the ancients, from which we may depart, upon discovering something which appears to us more satisfactory.

As the interpretation of the New Testament often depends upon these points, it is a question of importance.

SECTION XXXVI.

The points in the New Testament not genuine.

THE subject of the punctuation of the New Testament has been amply discussed by G. Fr. Rogall in his *Dissertatio de auctoritate et antiquitate interpunctionis in Nov. Testam.* I shall make great use of this piece in the present section, though I find myself under the necessity of differing from him sometimes in judgment.

It is certain, that in the time of the Apostles, the Grecians used points, or stops. A point at the top was equivalent to our full stop; in the middle it signified a colon; and at the bottom, it amounted either to our semicolon, or comma. They are thus described by Dionysius the Thracian, who lived at Rome in the time of Pompey, in his *Art of Speaking*; and by Diomedes in his second book *de Oratore*. But it is likewise certain, that these points were not used in common, but only in the schools of Grammarians, who endeavoured thereby

to facilitate the reading of Homer to their scholars. They laid a great stress upon the points, and some spent their whole lives in teaching them, and noting them in books.

Rogall endeavours indeed to prove, from the ninth book of Anastasius Sionita's *Contemplationes anagogicae* in Hexameron, that they were used in other books. His words are, "Postquam Moyses dixit; Et edificavit Dominus Deus coelam: magnus Clemens (Alexandrinus) faciens perfectum punctum, et tunc versus faciens initium, subjunxit: Quam accepit Adam in mulierem. Et mihi videtur pie admodum attendisse distinctionem. Nam Theodotian quoque sic distinxit idem verbum." But from these words nothing farther is to be gathered, than that Clemens Alexandrinus made use of a point, in explaining the words of Moses differently from the common acceptation, in order to render his new exposition more intelligible to the reader. Nor is much to be concluded from what he says of Theodotion, since that translator of scripture was probably no other than a Grammarian, and assisted his literal and obscure translation of the Old Testament by points, as they did theirs of Homer. The Apostles on the contrary were not Grammarians by profession; and most of their writings now extant are letters, some of which were written to intimate friends. Is it credible that they would accurately mark these with points, which were not in use any where but in the schools?

There was another method of dividing discourse, by writing in one line as many words as might be in some degree intelligible, when joined together; these united were called *πρῶτα*; we should call them a comma, or sentence. We shall have occasion to make further mention of them hereafter, and we shall find, that the ancients did certainly divide the New Testament into those sentences, of which they reckoned 2522 in Matthew, 2675 in Mark, &c. But it doth not follow from hence, that

the Apostles wrote their epistles in the same manner; and if they had, yet a doubt would remain, which words belonged to each sentence, since the ancient manuscripts, which we have of the New Testament, are not written in these sentences.

Some again used no other distinction of pause, but that of placing a point, or leaving a blank, where the sense of the period ended. This is the case of several manuscripts of the New Testament, and particularly of the Alexandrine. Possibly these distinctions ought not to be rejected wholly, and it is not unlikely that the Apostles sometimes made use of them. But it is pity, that they who have delivered to us extracts from these manuscripts, do not point out where these stops were made.

The whole of this subject then may be reduced to the following propositions:

1. Our point, colon, comma, and note of interrogation, are modern, and of no authority.
2. The Apostles probably denoted by a point, or a blank, where the sense of a discourse terminated.
3. Whoever desires to know, with some degree of probability, where these points or blanks were placed, must consult the manuscripts before the time of Jerome, of which we have two at the most; and the versions, if there be more than one, which were made from manuscripts of that antiquity. And even this will lead him no farther than to a small degree of probability.
4. The best rule of determining the proper place of a point or stop in the New Testament, is to follow the direction of common sense, in explaining the passage.

SECTION XXXVII.

Origin of the present points in the New Testament.

If it be asked, whence come the present points in the New Testament, their history is briefly this :

In the fourth century, Jerom began to add the comma and colon to the Latin version ; and they were then inserted in many more ancient manuscripts.

In the fifth century, Euthalius, a deacon of Alexandria, divided the New Testament into lines. I will not affirm, that these stichi or lines consisted of a certain number of letters, or that they were lines which comprehended one sense or sentence. But this much is certain, that when a copyist was disposed to contract his space, and therefore crouded the lines into each other, he then placed a point, where Euthalius had terminated the line.

In the eight century, the stroke was invented which we call a comma. In the Latin manuscripts, Jerom's points were introduced by Paul Warnfried an Alcuin, at the command of Charlemaign.

In the ninth century the Greek note of interrogation (;) was first made use of.

At the invention of printing, the editors placed the points arbitrarily, probably, without bestowing the necessary attention ; and Stephans in particular varied his points in every edition.

As this section is only an extract from Rogall's dissertation, I refer the reader to that for a proof of this history. It will there appear how little stress is to be laid upon the present points in the New Testament, and how much they are mistaken, who argue the connection or disjunction of words, from the consent of all the editions.

SECTION XXXVIII.

The blank spaces between the words not genuine.

EVEN the blank spaces at the end of words are not ancient. The Greeks formerly wrote their words without any separation, and the most ancient manuscripts of the New Testament are written in this manner. But those of a later date than the ninth century began to leave a space between the words. If therefore it were to be asked, whether Rom. vii. 14. ought to be read, *οἶδα μιν*, I know, or *οἶδαμιν*, we know, whether Gal. i. 9. should be *προσέβηκαμιν*, or *προσέβηκα μιν*? whether Philip i. 1. should be read *σὺν ἐπισκοποις*, together with the bishops, or *συνεπισκοποις*, the coadjutors of the bishops? these questions cannot be decided from our editions of the New Testament, nor from manuscripts, nor from ancient versions, but merely by the sound rules of interpretation.

SECTION XXXIX.

The Iota subscriptum is suspicious.

Of the Iota subscriptum see Majoris Epist. de Iotorum subscriptione suspecta, eorumque præsertim ex nummis perpetus exilis, Kiel. 1628.

There is no instance among the old Grecians of their writing the Iota, in the form of a point, or a small stroke under a letter, excepting the few instances alledged by Reinesius in his *Syntagma antiquarum inscriptionum*, which however he has not copied himself. Hence Major conjectures, that it was only added by travellers, who furnished Reinesius with inscriptions from ancient monuments. But we are not concerned about the form of

it so much, as about the Iota itself; and it cannot be denied, that the ancient Greeks sometimes wrote a common Iota in those places where we write the Iota subscriptum, or instead of it they wrote a figure somewhat resembling the figure (6); and sometimes wholly omitted the Iota. He alledges instances of both ways of writing it.

It seems to me, that the Greeks, in conformity to their language at that time, omitted the Iota in writing; and when they used it, they did this in imitation of antiquity, or it was an Archaismus, which was common in medals and monuments. The most ancient manuscripts, the Alexandrine, for instance, and that of S. Germain, have not the least trace of an Iota subscriptum. Probably therefore the Apostles did not use it; and in answering the question, whether *αγαπη* in Rom. xiii. 5, be the nominative or the dative case, recourse must be had, not to the Iota subscriptum, or to the omission of it, but to the rules of construction.

SECTION XL.

The Spiritus Asper is suspicious.

THE Spiritus asper, or that mark which corresponds to the Latin H, was undoubtedly in use among the ancient Greeks. Their H was at first a Spiritus asper, and was taken from the Hebrew *ה*, and was retained in the same figure H in Latin. The Greek H was used in ancient monuments, instead of a Spiritus asper, and the same letter stands for 100, because they wrote the word *ἑκατόν* thus, HEKATON.

But it is also certain, that the ancient Grecians did not judge it necessary always to express this aspiration upon their monuments. Thus, upon a medal of the Tyrians we find IEPAC. See Major's piece above quoted,

p. 2. 24. And the Spiritus lenis is not at all to be met with in any Grecian monuments or medals.

In those manuscripts in which these aspirations occur, they are thus expressed ;

Spiritus lenis ' or J or O

Spiritus asper ' or L or C

It is therefore very doubtful, whether the latter aspiration was in common use in the time of the Apostles ; and it becomes much more doubtful, if we consider that the most ancient versions so frequently confound *αυτες* with *αυτε*, that both words seem to have been written without any aspiration.

SECTION XLI.

Of the Abbreviations of words.

It cannot be denied, that the ancient Greeks and Latins used abbreviations of words. The writers of shorthand found them very convenient, and in medals it was sometimes necessary, for want of room, to abbreviate words.

But abbreviations are not very usual in ordinary manuscripts, except in the case of such words as frequently occur. Such are, ΘC (Θεος) KC (Χριστος) IC (Ιησους) XC (Χριστος) or (vires) &c. See Werstein's Prolegomena. But Beza, Gomarus, and Grotius, whenever it is their pleasure to declare against the authenticity of a reading, invent abbreviations, of which there is not a trace in any manuscript.

Nor will I deny that the writers of the New Testament, did, after the manner of the Grecians, sometimes make use of figures, in writing their numbers, though in our present editions the numbers are expressed at full length. But I do not pretend, in making this observation,

tion, to remove any of the difficulties which occur in the New Testament respect to the numbers. See Wettstein's Prolegomena.

SECTION XLII.

All the Accents of the New Testament are spurious.

We come now to the accents, the difference of which is so often made to determine the different signification of Greek words. The questions upon this subject are two.

1. Whether the ancient Grecians ever pronounced their language according to accent?

2. Whether the accents in the New Testament have been added by the authors of the books themselves, or by others?

As to the first question, some totally reject the accents, because they would confound the quantity, as it is determined by the rules of prosody. Hence Beza, Scaliger, Ger. Jo. Vossius de arte Grammatica, Isa. Vossius, de Poematum cantu et viribus rhythmici, and Salmasius in epistola ad Sarravium, have rejected them. Henninius has distinguished himself on the same side in a book entitled, *Dissertatio paradoxa, Græcam linguam non esse pronuntiandam secundam accentus*, 1664. This last has been answered by Jo. Rud. Wettstein in his *dissertatio epistolica de accentibus Græcorum*, which stands in his *Dissertationes de linguæ Græcæ Græcæ et genuinæ pronuntiatione*, Amst. 1686. He evinces by sufficient arguments, that the Greeks, long before the birth of Christ, regulated their pronunciation by accents, very much like those that are now in use. But he at the same time admits, that there is, in some respects, a difference betwixt the ancient and modern accents; that the old grammarians were at open war upon the subject of accents, and never
came

came to a treaty of peace ; and that accents were not used, except in the schools of grammarians, who made use of them in reading the old poets. In answer to this piece appeared at Leipzig in 1729 and 1733, Hoffmann's *Commentatio de genuina linguæ græcæ modulatione sine accentibus*. The author seemed confident, that he had given the final blow to the cause of accents ; but all I learned from him was, that Vossius the father followed Vossius the son in rejecting accents ; that the famous Florentine Pandeet was not written in Latin, but in Greek ; and that some ignorant physicians give more attention to modern writers, than to *Æsculapius*, whom I suppose to be some ancient Greek writer, hitherto unknown to me.

As to the principal objection, that accents do not coincide with the prosody of the Greek poets, and are therefore to be considered as a modern corruption of the Greek language, it is to be hoped that professor Gesner will soon communicate to the learned world what he has collected on that head. The papers of this learned Gentleman relating to the subject are at present in my hands, and I find, upon perusing them, that his opinion amounts to this, that the accents do not at all determine which syllable is to be pronounced longest ; that the accent, for instance, of *αἰσχροτης*, though placed on the first syllable, doth not oblige us to pronounce the word as a dactyle ; that as the Greeks spoke somewhat more musical than we, they pronounced some syllables more distinctly than others ; they raised their tone and dropped it ; and the accents are evidences of this. His opinion seems to me very probable, and we need only hear a native of Hungary speak his own, or the German language, distinctly, and we shall find, that he pronounces the syllables strictly according to prosodical quantity, and yet raises some syllables which are not the longest in the word.

I cannot express myself so clearly to the reader, as I might, if my paper could speak.

As to the second question, the best advocates for accents have not denied, that the ancient Grecians did not make use of them in common books, much less in letters, but in the schools of language; and they are not at all to be met with in the copies of the New Testament still extant, which are antecedent to the eighth century, and but seldom in the more modern ones. I cannot therefore admit, that the accents in the New Testament are authorised by the Apostles. They were probably first added by Euthalius, in the year 458, as is observed by Rogall in the dissertation before quoted.

SECTION XLIII.

Division of the New Testament into three books.

We proceed next to the division of the New Testament into books, chapters, and verses, or lines.

The ancient manuscripts commonly divided the New Testament into three books, of which the first contained the four gospels, the second, all the epistles, and the third, the Revelation of St John. The Acts of the Apostles were usually annexed to the epistles. It was very seldom that one transcriber copied the whole New Testament, or more than a single book. Hence we have so many copies of the gospels, and so few of the Revelation of St John. We shall treat hereafter of the order of the writings contained in each of these books.

SECTION XLIV.

Of the ancient and modern Chapters.

The ancients divided the New Testament into two kinds of chapters, some longer and some shorter. See

Simon's

Simon's *Hist. crit. du Texte du Nov. Testam.* and Martianay's prolegomena to the edition of the old Latin version of St Mathew. The longer sort of chapters were called in Greek *παραβ.* and in Latin Breves, and the table of the contents of each breves, which was prefixed to the copies of the New Testament, was called Breviarium. The shorter chapters were called *κεφαλαιον*, capitulum, and the list of them was called Capitulation.

This method of dividing is of very great antiquity; and Simon refers to one of the earliest fathers of the church, who makes mention of it. It appears to have been more ancient than Jerom, among other evidences, from this, that he expunges a passage out of the New Testament, which makes an entire chapter: it is the same which we transcribed from Martianay's edition above, in sect. 15. This was before his time the twentieth breves, and the seventy-fifth capitulum, in the old Latin version.

But there were formerly many of these divisions, and none of them was received by the whole church. St Matthew, for instance, contains according to the old breviana, 28 breves, but according to Jerom 68. Jerom divides him into 355 capitula, others into 74, others into 88, others into 117, the Syriac version into 76, and Erpenius's edition of the Arabic into 101. One of these divisions however was more approved than the rest, for Eusebius regulates his canon of the four gospels by it, and Jerom likewise made use of it. Tatian is said to have been the author of it, with respect to the breves; and Ammian, who lived at Alexandria in the third century, with respect to the Capitula. See Rumpie *Commentar. critica ad libros Nov. Testam.* According to this division St Matthew contains 68 breves and 355 capitula; St Mark 48 breves, and 234 capitula; St Luke 23 breves, and 342 capitula; and St John 18 breves.

and 231 capitula. All the Evangelists together 217 breves, and 1126 capitula.

The division of the epistles was later, and all that is observable in them is, that the number of the chapters is continued in one series throughout St Paul's epistles, because they are considered as one book.

But this whole division was laid aside, and the famous Cardinal Hugo de S. Caro introduced the chapters now in use. This eminent commentator lived in the twelfth century, and published a Bible cum postilla. This is the first Bible divided into chapters, which he subdivided again by adding in the margin the letters A, B, C, D, E, F, for the convenience of quotations and references. As Rumpsius has treated fully of this matter in his comment. ad libros Nov. Testam. sect. 35. and 36. I shall add nothing farther upon it, except only this, that our chapters are only helps for the more easy finding passages quoted from the New Testament, but that whoever reads the Bible by single chapters will be often in the dark, and at a loss for the Apostles meaning, since the chapters often end abruptly in the midst of a connection; for instance, Eph. iv. and Col. iii.

SECTION XLV.

Of the ancient division of the New Testament into lines or verses.

THE ancients had two kinds of verses, one of which they call στιχοι, and the other πρᾶξεις.

Στιχοι were only lines, which contained a certain number of letters, and therefore often broke off in the middle of a word. It was by these stichi or lines, that the size of books was measured. Josephus's twenty books of Jewish antiquities measured 60,000 of them, though in Ittigius's edition those books consist of no more than

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40,000

40,000 broken lines. If I remember right, Rogall in his *Dissert. de interpunctione Nov. Testam.* mistakes these lines for commas.

In order to understand this, we should have a clear idea of the ancient manner of writing. They divided their leaves very exactly by lines, upon which they wrote; each leaf had the same number of lines, and each line the same number of letters. We still discover in some manuscripts the lines by which they wrote. Six or eight of these leaves were joined together, and the former were called *Ternio*, the latter *Quaternis*. See Simon *hist. crit. du Texte* and Wetstien's *Prolegomena*. It was easy by this means to determine with great accuracy the size of books.

Peræta were lines, which were measured by the sense. Of these we have treated already in sect. 36. Simon in his *hist. crit. du Texte du Nov. Testam.* detects a strange error of Grotius in his *observationis sacrae in Nov. Testam.* notwithstanding Rumpæus transcribes from Croire, that these *peræta* were words. It is surprising that these men could, without being astonished at what they wrote, affirm, that St Matthew contained 2522 words, and 2560 verses. According to an ancient written list, which we have in Simon, there were of these *peræta* in

St Matthew	2600	1 Epist. to Timothy	208
St Mark	1600	2 Epist. to Timothy	288
St Luke	2900	Epist. to Titus	140
St John	2000	Epist. to Philemon	50
The Acts	2600	1 Epist. of Peter	200
Epist. to the Romans	1040	2 Epist. of Peter	140
1 Epist. to the Co-	} 1060	Epist. of James	220
rinthians		1 Epist. of John	220
2 Epist. to the Co-	} 1070	2 Epist. of John	20
rinthians		3 Epist. of John	20
Galatians	350	Epist. of Jude	60
Ephesians	375	Revelation	1200
Colossians	251		

Although I have transcribed this list, I have no inclination to warrant it; for the many round or even numbers render it very suspicious.

It was the custom formerly to place these lists at the end of the books, that the reader might see whether any thing had been omitted by the copyists. And in this respect it may be affirmed, that if the primitive Christians did not number the words, they numbered the letters of the New Testament.

The verses into which the New Testament is now divided, are more modern, and an imitation of the division of the Old Testament. Robert Stephens, the first inventor, introduced them in his edition of the year 1551. He made this division on a journey from Lyons to Paris, and, as his son Henry tells us, in the preface to the Concordance of the New Testament, he made it *inter equitandum*. I apprehend this must mean, that when he was weary of riding, he amused himself with this work at his inn. The wild and indigested invention of the learned printer was soon introduced into all editions of the New Testament; and it must be confessed, that in quoting and consulting the Bible, there is great use in the division into verses; at least no Concordance could have been made, had not the New Testament been subdivided into lesser parts. But the interpretation of this sacred book has suffered greatly by this division. For, not to mention that Stephens often ends a verse at the wrong place, against the sense of the passage, the division itself is quite contrary to the nature of the epistles, which are connected; whereas separate verses appear to the eyes of the learned, and to the minds of the unlearned, as so many detached sentences. Hence arose the custom of explaining each verse separately, which sometimes produced a very false interpretation. Rud. Wetstein and Chr. Fr. Sinner have exposed this grievance, in particular dissertations, de Distinctionibus Nov. Testam.

and Rumpæus in his *commun. crit.* in *Nov. Testam.* Sect. 37. enumerates the other complainants on this head, among whom we must reckon Mr Locke, in his *Essay* for the understanding of St Paul's epistles. It is to be wished that the verses had been formed, not from the sense, but from the number of letters, like the *Stichi* of the ancients, for in that case, they could not have done such violence to the meaning of the author. However, it is now become necessary, unless we resolve to render useless all the theological works hitherto published, to abide by Stephens's division, and only to take care in editions of the New Testament not to break off the line with the verse. The verses may be continued without interruption, and the Bible may be rendered equally useful for references, by printing the numbers in the margin, as hath been done by Bengelius.

SECTION XLVI.

The use of the old versions of the New Testament.

As I would not advise any one to make a large collection of modern translations of the New Testament, from which he can learn little or nothing new, so I am clear in the utility of the ancient versions, both in determining the various readings of the New Testament and in interpreting it. We there find the verbal and literal interpretations of persons, who were better acquainted with the language of the New Testament, and the customs sometimes alluded to, than we are; and they are preferable to fathers in this, that they give us the bare literal sense, whereas the fathers often subjoin various edifying remarks, and mystical interpretations.

We will begin our account of them in the East, and consider in the following order, the Syriac, the Coptic, the Arabic, the Ethiopic, the Armenian, and Persian, translations.

translations. Next will follow those of the West, the Latin, the Gothic, the Anglo-Saxon, and that of the old Franks.

SECTION XLVIII.

The several editions of the Syriac version.

THE best account we have of the Syriac version is in Simon's *Hist. crit. des Verf. du Nov. Testam.* But as, excepting him, most of those who have written concerning this version, have too much betrayed their ignorance, I beg the reader's leave to enlarge upon it more than usual.

It is in the first place, necessary, carefully to distinguish between the old Syriac version of the New Testament and some later ones, which were made in the fifth and seventh centuries. It contains the gospels, the acts, and all the epistles of St Paul, the first of St John, and St Peter, and that of St James. The Syrians call it in opposition to other versions, the *Literal*. See Assemanni *Bibl. orient. T. ii.* It is this literal version, of which we have several editions in print, and which is received by all sects of Syrian Christians, by the Nestorians, Jacobites, and Maronites. See Simon and Walton's *Prolegomena*.

Moses of Mardin, whose life is related at large by Asseman in *Bibl. orient.* was the first who made this version, known in Europe. The Patriarch of the Maronite Christians having sent him to Pope Leo the tenth, it was on that occasion, that Widmanstad learned the Syriac tongue. In a second Embassy in 1522, to Pope Julius the third, to whom Moses was to pay homage in the name of the Syrian church, he was at the same time charged by the Patriarch to cause the Syriac New Testament to be printed in Europe. No one could be found

at Rome or Venice, who would undertake the work. At length Albert Widmanstad prevailed with the Emperor Ferdinand the first, to be at the expence of the impression, which was committed to the care of Moses Widmadstad, and John Lucretius. To these persons we are indebted for the first edition of the Syriac New Testament, printed at Vienna in 1555, in which the two last epistles of St John, the second of St Peter, the epistle of St Jude, and the Revelation of St John, are wanting. A thousand copies were printed, of which the Emperor reserved to himself for sale, five hundred, sent three hundred to the two Syrian Patriarchs, and made a present to Moses of two hundred copies, together with twenty dollars. Of this first and very scarce edition, see Simon's Hist. &c.

Of the other editions we have an account in And. Muller's *diff. de versionibus Syriacis*, in his *Symbol Syriac*. They are as follow :

2. Tremellius's edition at Geneva 1569, in folio. It was a copy of the former, not in Hebrew, but in Syriac letters, with the addition of the Greek text and Beza's version. Tremellius had a Syriac manuscript, but Simon testifies that he made very little use of it.

3. The Antwerp edition, in the fifth part of the *Biblia regia*, which began to be published at Antwerp in the year 1571. To this is added the Latin version of Guido Fabricius de la Boderie, and some passages are altered from a manuscript brought from the East by William Postel. The letters are Hebrew.

Muller mentions two more Antwerp editions, in Syriac characters, of 1567 and 1620, with which I am unacquainted.

4. The Paris edition, published by the same Guido Fabricius de la Boderie, in Hebrew characters. He printed his Latin version over the Syriac lines.

5. Elias

5. Elias Hutter, in the year 1599, inserted in his *Opus duodecim. linguarum*, or his edition of the New Testament in twelve languages, the Syriac New Testament; and as some books had been deficient in the books hitherto published, he took the needless and ridiculous pains of translating those books, and John VIII. 1—11. into Syriac, as if we were interested in reading a new translation of a book, of which we have it in our power to read the original.

6. Martin Trost's edition at Cothen 1621, in quarto. It was printed with a beautiful Syriac type, and here and there with points or vowels.

7. In the mean time Lud. de Dieu published the Revelation of St John at Leyden, 1627, from a manuscript which had been in the possession of Scalliger; and

8. In the year 1630, Pocock published at Leyden the four deficient epistles of Peter, John, and Jude, from English manuscripts.

9. The Polyglot of Paris has the whole Syriac New Testament in Syriac characters. It is usual among the Syrians to add vowels only in those passages, where the want of them might occasion an ambiguity. But in this edition they were added throughout by Gabriel Sionita. The next edition was in

10. The London Polyglot.

11. There are several exceptions to the edition published at Hamburg in the year 1664 by Ægidius Guttier, at his own expence, in Syriac characters, to which he annexed a Syriac vocabulary. He frequently misplaces the points, and in the notes annexed, comparing it with other editions, he passes off his own blunders and the errors of the press, for various readings; and invents a Syriac manuscript, from which he pretends to have taken his readings. I say, he invents it; for at the time of his writing his preface to his Syriac New Testament, he knew of no such manuscript. He pretends
moreover

moreover to have taken from thence all the points, whereas the Syrians used very few points. However, we are so far obliged to this man for his edition, as it is that in which beginners commonly learn the Syriac, and as it may be bought cheap.

Christ. Knorre of Rosenroth, in the year 1684, reprinted Gutbier's edition at Sultzbach, in Hebrew characters. See the *Acta Eruditorum* of the year 1690. p. 97.

12. In the year 1709, Ch. Schaaf printed a beautiful edition of this version, in Syriac characters, at Leyden. Leusden assisted in it as far as Luke xviii. 27.; hence the points are placed in the first part according to the Syriac Chaldee dialect, and in the rest, according to another Syriac dialect, because these learned men differed in opinion with respect to the dialects.

Schaaf added to his Syriac New Testament, Tremellius's version, corrected by him, and a Syriac vocabulary, which may serve at the same time for a Concordance.

13. In the last place, Reineccius inserted the Syriac version in his *Biblia quadrilingua*, published at Leipzig in 1713 in folio.

Simon in his *hist. critique des versions du Nov. Testament*. Walton in his *Prologomena*, and Asseman in his *Bibl. Orient.* give an account of the Syriac manuscripts of the New Testament. It appears from the last mentioned author, that there are in the Vatican two Syriac copies of the four gospels, one of the year 548, the other of 736. We find the order, in which the books of the New Testament stand in the Syriac version, in a Syriac poem of Ebedjesu, which Asseman has inserted in his *Bibl. Orient.*

SECTION XLVIII.

The Syriac version was translated immediately from the original Greek text.

THE learned Bengelius in his introd. in crisin Nov. Testam. throws out a conjecture, that possibly the Syriac version was not translated immediately, or solely, from the Greek text; but that the translator also made use of the Latin version. But the frequent agreement of this with the Latin version, which was taken from the best Greek manuscripts, is so far from discrediting the Syriac version, that it only proves both to be of the earliest antiquity, and to have been rendered from the purest Greek text.

My father has already refuted this opinion in his tractatio critica de var. lection. Nov. Testam. to which I would add the following argument.

i. The Syriac version varies in many and those very remarkable passages from the Latin. Dr Milne has collected a considerable number of them in his prolegom. For instance,

i John v. 7. is in the Latin version, but in no copy of the Syriac. For though Tremellius inserts that verse in his translation, and Gutbier interpolates it in the text, the ancient authentic Syriac version is not affected thereby.

Matt. v. 22. the Greek is ~~omitted~~ omitted in Jerom's Latin version. The Syriac not only translates it, but even makes use of the Greek word **ἄρα**, which plainly shews, that he had the Greek text before him.

The Syriac copy contains not a word of that remarkable interpolation of the Latin version before Jerom's time, in Mat. xx.

The words Mat. vi. 11. **τοῦ ἄρτου τοῦ ἡμετέρου** are rendered by the Latin vulgate, *panem nostrum quotidianum*.

anum, and by Jerom *super substantialem*. The Syriac follows neither of these, but renders it, the bread of our need.

In John xvi. 2. the words *λατρίαν προσφέρειν τῷ Θεῷ* are rendered by the Latin, *obsequium se prestare Deo*. But the Syrian had manifestly the Greek text before him, when he translated it, that he offers a sacrifice to God; for the Greek *λατρία* may signify a sacrifice, but the Latin, *obsequium*, doth not.

2. As the Greek language was used in all the great towns in Syria, it is extremely improbable, that a Syrian translator should choose to translate from the Latin version rather than from the Greek text. Add to this, that the Syriac version was possibly made on the other side of the Euphrates, where Greek was understood, and Latin was not.

SECTION XLIX.

The antiquity of the Syriac version.

THE antiquity of the Syriac version is carried too far back by some, and brought down too low by others. Some apprehend it to have been done by Xenayas, in the fifth or sixth century, and appeal to Asseman; but Asseman very carefully distinguishes the **פישטא** from those versions, and in T. ii. p. 14. even argues against those who confound them together.

From the very testimony of Bar Hebræus in his *borreum mysteriorum*, that a more accurate translation of the Greek Testament into a Syriac was done in the time of Xenayas, who died in the year 520, it is evident, that a more ancient one was then extant.

And as christianity was propagated so early in Mesopotamia and Syria, is it credible that those churches should have no translation of the New Testament into their

vulgar

vulgar tongue? especially if we consider, that, according to the testimony of Melitus, who lived in the year of Christ 170, they had a translation of the Old Testament? For in his comments upon the Septuagint, in Gen. xlii. 13. he has these words; the Syriab and Hebrew render this, *hanging*, in order to make the type the more significant. See Milne's Prolegom. 1239.

Walton, in his Prolegom. alleges an important attestation of Jerom. by which it appears, that in his time the Syrians read the bible in their churches. His words are, "The Syrian Ephrem is become so famous, that his writings are read in some churches after the Bible."

I know very well, how apt the oriental writers are to intermix truth and fables in their histories. But shall we therefore reject their testimony in a case in which they only can give it? And they date the Syriac version so high as the first century. Gregorius Bar Hebræus writes, that the New Testament was translated in the days of Addeus, i. e. Thaddeus, the apostle. See Asseman's bibl. orient. T. ii, p. 229. and the index to the third volume under the name, Addæus. But what is most observable is the subscription of a Syriac Manuscript, which we find in Asseman, T. ii. p. 486. At the end of a Syriac copy of the four gospels are the following words; "There was at Edessa an ancient written gospel, but which was still legible. Not a single iota was expunged, and it was more legible than some modern books. By reason of its great age, the ten first leaves had been lost. At the end was the following subscription;

"This sacred book was finished on Wednesday the eighteenth day of the first month Canum, (i. e. December), in the year 398 (of the Greeks, i. e. in the year of Christ 78) by the hands of the apostle Addæus, a fellow labourer of Mar Mari, and a disciple

"ple of the apostle Mar Adeus, whom we intreat to
"pray for us. Amen."

I should not lay any stress upon a testimony like this, if it stood single, but cannot wholly reject it, when it comes in concurrence with other evidence.

Whence is it, that all sects of the Syrian Christians unanimously receive this version, if it were not antecedent to their divisions? This question has been started by Simon.

As the first translators of the New Testament omitted the Revelation of St John, it follows, that his version was prior either to the writing of this book, or to the reception of it by the whole church. And he must have lived a considerable time before the fourth century, for he omits the epistle of St Jude, which was received as divine by the Syrian church in the fourth century, and is quoted by Ephrem the Syrian. See Wolff's *Cura*, &c. the last volume, p. 340.

There are in the Syriac New Testament some translations which bears witness to its early antiquity. It is notorious, for instance, that the christians began pretty early to make an essential difference between Bishops and Presbyters. But this difference was unknown to the Syriac translator. See Phil. i. 1. where he renders *ἐπισκοποις*, with the elders, and 1 Tim. iii. 1. where *ἐπισκοπος* is interpreted, the office of an elder. Besides this, he sometimes writes the names of places and persons, which had not been expressed clearly in the Greek characters, with more accuracy than could have been done by one who lived some centuries later, when the memory of these names was lost. I will not detain the reader, else I might illustrate this by the names of Alphæus, Cleophas, Capernaum, Iscariot, Canaanite, &c.

In the last place, Ephrem, who lived about the year of Christ 370, quotes the New Testament according to the Syriac version now extant. See his Syriac works
published

published at Rome, part I. p. 18, 37, 107, 189, 221, 313, 318, 351, 357, 391; where we find the following passages quoted from our literal Syriac version; John i. p. xiii. 16. Col. iii. 5. Gal. i. 1. Mat. xxii. 40. Eph. i. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 6. 1 Pet. i. 11. Mat. iii. 17. Luke i. 75. Gal. iii. 13. It is very seldom that he varies from it with the freedom with which the ancients quoted the works of others from their memory; as in p. 12, 254, 271, where he quotes Col. i. 16. 2 Cor. vii. 2. Acts v. 41. See Bengelii tract. de sinceritate Nov. Testam. tuenda, with my father's remarks.

SECTION L.

Some objections answered.

HAVING undertaken to treat fully of this version, I shall now consider the objections which have been made to its antiquity.

1. It is objected, that the Syriac sometimes makes use of Latin words, which were not current til the middle ages; for instance, in Mat. xxvii. 65. the Greek *κουρτια* is translated *ܩܘܪܬܝܐ* questionerius. See Groun upon the passage, and Vossius de translatione 70. interpr. c. 28.

Ans. This is a mere erratum in Widmanstad's edition. It should be read *ܩܘܪܬܝܐ* custonde, which is St Matthew's Greek word in a Syriac dress. This has been already answered by Simon in his hist. crit. des Vers.

2. We are told, that there are in the Syriac New Testament Greek words wholly unknown to the ancient Grecians; for instance, *ܕܡܐ* (dimo) a treasure, which is derived from the modern Greek word, *κεντρον*, silver.

Ans. This is not a Greek, but an old oriental word,

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which occurs also in the Arabic tongue, and is derived from the Hebrew קבור to deposit.

3. The Syriac, in Rom. i. 16. and other places, calls the Greeks רומא or Romans, which name they had not till the time of Constantine the Great, when Byzantium became Roma Nova, and the territory about that city was called *Romania*.

Ans. This objection results from the grossest ignorance. The Greeks are always called גוֹיִם in the Syriac New Testament (see, for instance, Rom. i. 14.) and the Romans רומא. The Syrians, and afterwards the heathens in general, are called גוֹיִם. Hence the Syriac interpreter uses this word, when the Greek εἰδωλολάτραι is to be rendered heathens. See the Bibliotheca Bremensis, cl. vii. fasc. 3. p. 482. where Hazenberg confutes this ridiculous objection.

4. The Syriac version has the conclusion of the Lord's prayer; for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Now as these words were not in St Matthew till the time of Chrysostom, the translation, in which they occur, must, it is urged, have been done since Chrysostom's time. This doubt is raised by Dr Milline in his Prolegom.

Ans. It is not yet perfectly clear, that the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer is spurious.

But admitting that it is, yet the Syriac version may be ancient, and this addition to it modern. And I cannot but take notice on this occasion, that the Syriac version has met with the fate of all books, being blemished by copyists in some passages with spurious readings. See Michaelis de var. lection. Nov. Testam. sect. 70, 72, 77.

5. Wurfstein in his Prolegom. brings this further charge against the Syriac version, that in acts xxi. 7. the city Ptolemais is there called by the same name of Accho, which it bears, Judges i. 31. Hence he concludes, that

this version is modern, he being of opinion, that Ptolemais did not resume the name of Accho till after the time of the Saracens.

But though he is of this opinion, he doth not deny, that Accho was the name upwards of a thousand years before Christ. If this name was totally lost, whilst the city was called Ptolemais, where did the Saracenes learn, and how came they to restore it? Perhaps the people of the country preserved the ancient name, though it was changed in the city by foreigners.

Wetstein further charges the Syriac version with having falsely translated certain passages, among which, through gross ignorance, he reckons Rev. viii. 13. whereas the Revelation of St John is no part of the Syriac New Testament. He should have considered in general, that the most ancient and best version might sometimes mistake, or that some might escape the knowledge of the best translator. He manifestly confounds it with Philoxenus's version. And he rejects it for being divided according to the canons of Eusebius; as if it were impossible, that not only the version, but even the original, might be divided according to those canons, some hundred years after the version. Is the Septuagint therefore modern, because in our present editions it is divided into chapters, which were invented long after the birth of Christ? Might not the book be ancient and the division of it modern?

The late M. la Croze, in his *Theol. epist.* tom. iii. p. 282. denies the antiquity of our printed Syriac version. He judges it to be the work of Xenayas, and is of opinion, that the true ~~ancient~~ ancient Syriac version is to be sought for among the Syrian Christians in Malabar. To prove this, he alleges, that Greg. Abulpharagius cites Luke xii. 24. Consider the ravens, in the Syriac thus; ~~ܠܡܢܬܐ~~ (for so the words should stand, which are so disguised in the printed edition of his letters, as to have no meaning,

meaning at al.) whereas in our printed Syriac New Testament, we read ܡܬܬܝܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ.

I might ask, whence it appears that Abulpharagius quoted the old version, and not that of Xenayas. This would at once destroy the whole argument. But this is unnecessary. Abulpharagius, like all the fathers of the Church, sometimes confounded the words of one evangelist with those of another. Our printed Syriac version has in Mat. vi. 26. these very words ܡܬܬܝܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ.

As M. la Croze was one of the most learned men of this century, it were to be wished that he had communicated to us his other doubts, concerning the antiquity of the Syriac version; for he tells us, "Multa quidem alienum observavi. But perhaps they were not more considerable than this before us; for, great as his abilities were, he confesses himself, that he had made no great progress in the Syriac. We should else have been influenced by the bare opinion of so learned a man, though it were unsupported by arguments.

I must add, that I could not find the words cited in Abulpharagius, and therefore imagine, there must be an error in the number of the page referred to; and that Abulpharagius, p. 100. mentions that Syriac version which is called ܡܬܬܝܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ, though he is there speaking of the Old Testament.

SECTION II.

The Author, Character, and use of the Syriac version.

It cannot with any certainty or probability be determined, who was the Syriac Translator. The Syrians themselves sometimes ascribe the work to St Mark the Evangelist, and sometimes to Thadæus; but I find great difficulties in both accounts. See Simon's Hist. crit. des versions, &c. and Asseman's Bibl. orient. At least I dis-

cover in 1 Cor. vii. 2, 6, 7. some traces of an early superstition in this version, which I cannot impute to the Apostles, that celibacy is particularly a holy state. For the Greek of ver. 2. "Let every man have his own wife," is rendered, "Let every man keep his own wife," as if St Paul meant to recommend an entrance into the marriage state but a continuance in it; in ver. 6. *κατα σπουδα* is rendered in the Syriac, As to the weak; and and in ver. 7. is added this expression *בבשר* in purity.

The Syriac version is not done verbatim, but endeavours only to express the sense, as hath been already observed by Dr Milne, N. 1241. See Rom. ix. 22. xiii. 1. Hence a liberty is taken of omitting some things, which were necessary in the Greek, but not in the Syriac. Such is the translation of Eli, Eli, lama Sabachthani, Mat. xxvii. 46. Ephphatha, Mark. vii. 34. and Siloam, John ix. 7. because the meaning of these was known to every Syriac.

Those however are mistaken who imagine the Syriac version to be done in the same dialect which our Saviour spoke. The language at Jerusalem was Chaldee, which was somewhat different from the Syriac. The reader will be convinced of this, upon comparing the Greek text with the Syriac version in Acts i. 19. 1. Cor. xvi. 22.

Of the use of the Syriac version, see Simon's Hist. des versions du Nov. Testam. where we find some agreeable extracts from it. The real use of it consists in these three points.

1. The antiquity of it renders it very useful, in examining and determining the various readings of the New Testament. See Milne's Prolegom.

2. It contains many genuine and excellent readings, which we do not meet with elsewhere; such as Mat. vi. 7. John xvi. 2. Rom. ix. 22. xiii. 13.

3. It confirms some ancient rites in which we are deeply interested; such as the celebration of Sunday, 1 Cor. xi. 20.

In order to extend this utility of the Syriac version, Latin translations have been taken from it, but they are so very erroneous, that they cannot safely be consulted in preference to the Syriac text.

SECTION LII.

Of the more modern Syriac Versions.

THE translation of the second epistle of St Peter, the second and third of St John, that of St Jude, and the Revelation of St John, is doubtless modern, and not done by the same hand which translated the rest of the New Testament into Syriac. Some words, which are rightly rendered by the old translator, were not at all understood by the other; for instance, *aidios* in Jude 6. he renders very wrongly, *Invisible*; whereas in Rom. i. 20. it is rightly rendered *Eternal*. I pass over the great diversity of time, because I cannot easily explain it to such of my readers as do not understand Syriac*. Nor are these books in the manuscripts of the Syriac version. Neither the Nestorians, nor the Jacobites, read texts from the Revelation of St John in their churches; and Abedjesu distinguishes the three other epistles of James, Peter, and John, from the four above mentioned, by adding these words; "The three epistles which are attributes to the Apostles James, Peter, and John, in all manuscripts and languages, and are called Catholic." See Simon and Asselman. The translator of the Revelation of St John

* See my father's notes upon Bengelius de sinceritate Nov. Testamenti.

John is known by the subscription: his name was Caspar, and he was a native of India. See Asseman, and La Croze Hist. Christ. Ind.æ. That it was translated immediately from the Greek text, appears, among other marks, from this, that the translator even expresses in the Syriac the article *ܐܝܢ*, where it is very superfluous.

There are some more modern Syriac versions of the New Testament, which have not been published in print. Such are,

1. The version of Xenayas, whose surname was Philoxenus. He was bishop of Mabug or Hierapolis from 48; to 518. It is common to attribute to him a translation of the New Testament, but history goes no further than affirming that it was done in his time, in the city of Mabug; and Moses Aghelæus, who lived in the sixth century, ascribes it to Polycarp. See Asseman Bible. or. T. ii. and Renaudot liturg. or. T. ii.

2. This version was published with emendations by Thomas of Heraclea, bishop of Germanicia, in the year of Christ 616. The Monophysites in Syria frequently quote him in their expositions of scripture.

3. The inhabitants of the mountainous parts of Assyria having a particular dialect of the Syrian tongue, they make use of a version of their own, which is called the Carkusian, from Carkuf in Mesopotamia, and is frequently quoted by Gregorius the Syrian. See Asseman.

SECTION LIII.

Of the Coptic Version.

We have a version of the New Testament in the Coptic language, of which I can only judge from the testimony of others. The Coptic was the vulgar tongue in Egypt, before the eruption of the Saracenes; it is a compound

pound of ancient Egyptian and Greek, but is at present neither spoken nor understood by the Egyptians. The best account of this language is scattered in the *Theſ. epist. la Croz.* of which see the index under the words *Copticus*, *Ægyptus*. Wilke and Wilkins.

They who have hitherto been qualified to read and examine the Coptic version, pretend that it is ancient; and Wilkins endeavours, in the preface to his edition of the Coptic New Testament, to prove the antiquity of it by several arguments which are not satisfactory to the editors of the *Acta Eruditorum* of the year 1717. His principal argument is drawn from one Antonius, who was born about the year of Christ 151. This Egyptian is known not to have understood Greek, and yet Athanasius testifies of him, that he received great benefit from the public reading of the Bible; and he himself thus addresses his Egyptian hearers, "We have the holy scriptures." But the compilers of the *Acta Eruditorum* objected to this, that it proves no more than that there was at that time a translation of the Bible in Egypt; but leaves the point doubtful whether it was the same which we call the Coptic. This objection is the more plausible, as there is actually another version of the Bible extant, in the dialect of Upper Egypt. See *Theſ. la Croz. T. iii. p. 285.* However I will not venture to decide this matter, having never read Wilkins's preface; for after a very diligent search, I have not been able to obtain his Coptic New Testament. It is however to far a capital version, that it hath produced many other Arabic versions. For after the Saracens over-ran Egypt, and extirpated the old language, the Egyptians commonly annexed an Arabic version to their Coptic New Testament, nay the Arabic version almost superseded the Coptic.

Thomas Marshall had once thoughts of printing the Coptic version, but his design proving abortive, he was obliged to leave the honour and the labour to the celebrated

brated David Wilkens. This was a native of Memel, who after having studied the Coptic language, repaired to Amsterdam in order to commit his version to the press. But having a better prospect at Oxford, he repaired thither, and in the year 1716 published the Coptic New Testament, which was printed at the Theatre, at the expence of the University *. Besides a large preface, he added a Latin translation to the Coptic text. But Jablonki and La Croze have no very favourable opinion of his work, and are willing to allow him the first place among the pretenders in learning. The former affirms, that in a cursory perusal of only the translation of Matthew, Mark, and the Acts, he discovered no less than 150 variations from the Coptic text; so that one, who is not acquainted with the Coptic, will be little the better for the Latin translation.

SECTION LIV.

Of the Arabic versions in general.

Of the Arabic versions see an account in Simon's hist. crit. des Verit. and a more full and accurate account in my father's Tract. de var. lection. I shall therefore be the shorter on this head.

There are many Arabic versions of the New Testament, and some more than we have in print. For since the Arabic tongue has been spread from the Indian to the Atlantic ocean, and the Syrian and Egyptian tongues have been superseded by it, it has been usual among the inhabitants of those countries to annex to their old versions, which are now become unintelligible, Arabic after-versions; and these are done from the Syriac or Coptic, even as those added to the Greek text are done immediately from the Greek. See Simon on this head, who appeals to the catalog. Bibl. Lugdunens. 1674, for a proof that

that the Greek text and the Arabic version are sometimes written together.

It is a general opinion among the learned, that all the Arabic versions are later than the time of Mahommed, and that before the time of that impostor the New Testament was not extant in Arabic. If this were undoubtedly true, it would at least be matter of wonder, whence it came to pass, that the Arabs could spare this necessary treasure so long, considering that Christianity had taken deep root in Arabia so early, that Mahommed was induced by the number and power of the Christians, to think it expedient to flatter them frequently in his Koran, and to extol Jesus above all prophets, and in some respects above himself. I know it is pretended by some, that the Arabs were strangers both to writing and books before the time of Mahommed; but the stile of the Koran is so elaborate and elegant, that we cannot set up this master-piece of manly poetry as the first specimen of an Arabic book; the Arabians must have brought the elegance of their language to some perfection by writings before that time. Besides, this pretence would needlessly contradict the whole of the Arabic history; not only the doubtful history of ancient times, but even that of the time of Mahommed. For the Arabians, before his time, are said to have applied themselves much to the study of eloquence and poetry. They held an annual assembly at Ocadh, in which their poets were rivals for a prize, and the poem which obtained it was deposited in their Archives, and sometimes written upon silk in golden letters. And that this assembly was prior to the time of Mahommed, is clear from hence, that it ceased in his time. See Pocock's Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 159. 381. In the time of Mahommed, a poem written by one Labid, was, in honour of its author, affixed to the gate of the temple of Mecca, but Labid preferred to it the second

second chapter of the Koran. See Sale's preliminary discourse to the Koran, p. 61.

If therefore a reason must be alledged, I should chuse to say, that perhaps the Syriac might be so well known in Arabia, that the Arabs, like other oriental Christians, might content themselves with the Syriac version. However I must confess, that I have not yet met with any satisfactory grounds for supposing all the Arabic versions to be modern. Some affect only the version of St Paul's epistles in the Polyglot, but leave untouched the text of the gospels published by Erpenius. I am therefore of opinion that the matter deserves further examination, and shall only consider some of the weak arguments which attempt to prove that all the Arabic versions are posterior to Mahommed.

Brian Walton appeals to the names of persons and places in the Old Testament which are expressed in the Arabic versions, in the same manner as in the Koran. But it doth not follow from hence, that they took them from the Koran. Mahommed probably left these names as he found them, in Arabic, for the Arabians were not unacquainted with the history of the Old Testament; and every translation, however ancient, must have expressed them in like manner in Arabic.

Others argue, that in Luke xi. 31. *scilicet*, The south, is rendered in the Arabic קבלה The place to which men turn in prayer, which is derived from the religion of Mahommed, who directed his Arabians to turn in prayer towards Mecca. But this rite of the Arabians was of a much earlier date than the time of Mahommed; and he even abolished it at first, directing his followers to turn toward Jerusalem; though some years after, in compliance with the Arabs, re-established it.

The most important objection to the antiquity of all Arabic versions is this, that, had Mahommed been possessed of a New Testament in Arabic, he could not well have

have committed such egregious blunders as he does, in relating the history of the Bible. But if we consider,

1. That many false and apocryphal gospels were at that time current in the East, which might easily fall into the hands of Mahommed, and from which some of his errors were actually taken.

2. That Mahommed knew nothing of chronology, and though he might have read Mat. new and Luke, knew not, for instance, how long Moses lived before that time, and whether Mary the mother of Christ, and Mary the sister of Moses, were not one and the same person, as he pretends.

If, I say, we take in these considerations, then the strongest objection falls to the ground, and it becomes probable, that the Arab might have an ancient version of the New Testament, though we cannot decisively affirm, whether that published by Erpenius, or some other version unknown to us, deserves the honour of being esteemed an ancient one.

SECTION LV.

Of the editions of the Arabic version.

THE Arabic versions of the New Testament, which have been published in print, are not to be considered as one, but are very distinct both with respect to their age and language. So that when Doctor Milne, in his various readings refers to the Arabic in general, he leaves us at a loss which Arabic version.

In my father's book before quoted, he mentions sect. 27, the following editions of the Arabic version.

1. The Roman edition of the four gospels, which was published in three folio volumes, in the year 1594, and another impression in 1619.

Simon takes notice, that in some copies there is a Latin

tin version, and that it differs much from those versions which are annexed to the Coptic New Testament, and approaches nearer to those annexed to the Syriac New Testament; hence he concludes, that it was not translated from the Greek, but from the Syriac. But the conclusion will not hold; for had it been translated from the Syriac, it would not have agreed only in some instances, but entirely with those versions which are placed against the Syriac text.

Erpenius, in his preface to the Arabic New Testament, remarks of this edition, that, except the thirteen first chapters of St Matthew, it agrees very much with the manuscript from which he caused the gospels to be printed.

2. This very edition was printed in the Paris Polyglot, and a version of the other books of the New Testament was added. It is a misfortune, that the dispute which arose among the editors, proved the means of depriving us of the necessary account of the manuscripts from which the version of the epistles is taken. However, my father shews incontestibly, sect. 30, that this version of St Paul's epistles could not be very ancient, because, for instance, Spain is there called Andalusia, in Rom. xv. 24. and Italy is called by way of distinction from Attalia, Acts xviii. 2. the Frankish or European, which name was not applied to Europe till after the Crusades.

Gabriel Sionita has taken very unnecessary pains in correcting what appeared to him bad Arabic in this edition. A version of this kind is not highly valued for the elegance of its language, but for its pure antiquity.

3. The Arabic version of the New Testament, which was in the Paris Polyglot, was printed in the London Polyglot, after having been corrected from some manuscripts.

It was from this edition that Doctor Milne delivers some extracts of readings, which he himself confesses to

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have taken only from the Latin after translation. He justly esteemed it to be an immediate version from the Greek text, and not an offspring of the Syriac version. See his arguments, sect. 1296, 1297.

4. Erpenius published the New Testament in Arabic at Leyden, in the year 1616, from a manuscript written in the Upper Egypt in the year 1342, which manuscript he copied even in apparent grammatical errors. This is therefore the fairest and most genuine edition of the Arabic version, but as he annexed no Latin interpretation, we find it very seldom quoted, except that in the Acts of the Apostles, Milne takes the readings from this manuscript, and not from the Polyglot.

His text of the gospels agrees chiefly with the Polyglot. He found in his manuscript, at the end of the gospels, the following account: "The copy of this book (*i. e.* of the gospels alone,) was finished on the sixteenth day of the month Bauna, in the year of the Martyrs 988, (*i. e.* of Christ 1272.) It was transcribed from another neat copy, of which the writer attests that he copied it from a manuscript of the Egyptian bishop John; and he affirms, that he took his copy from a corrected edition of Nisiulman, the son of Azailkefat." So that this version appeared to be pretty ancient.

He supposes the translation of the epistles, which he publishes, to be taken from the Syriac version; and my father, in sect. 29, shews it probable, that the Revelation of St John was taken from the Coptic.

5. An Arabic and Latin Bible was published in the 1671, by the Romish congregation de Propaganda Fide, under the inspection of Sergius Rissus, bishop of Damascus: but it is neither of use in criticism, nor in interpretation of the New Testament, having been altered from the Latin version. See Simon, p. 215—219.

6. The English Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, printed, in the year 1727, a neat Arabic New Testament for the use of the Christians in Asia. This edition is very scarce, for though 10,000 copies were printed, not one was sold in Europe, but only a few were sent as presents to some learned men. The text is taken from the Polyglot, but Solomon Nigri altered it, by the Society's direction, in those passages which vary from our present Greek reading. This edition therefore, however useful for the edification of oriental Christians, cannot be applied to any critical use.

Besides these there was an Arabic Bible printed at Burest, in the year 1700, and the gospels in Arabic, at Aleppo, in 1706. But all I know of these editions is from Le Long's *Bibl. S. T.* i. p. 125, 126, and from Helladii *status præf. Eccles. Græc.* p. 17. I pass over designedly the editions of single books of the New Testament in Arabic.

SECTION LVI.

Of the Ethiopic Versions.

THE Ethiopic tongue being little known among the learned, they have hitherto been obliged to give a less satisfactory account of the Ethiopic, than of any other oriental version of the New Testament; and their accounts have been most erroneous when they have been taken from the Ethiopic prefaces to the Romish edition. But this defect has been supplied by my father in his *Tract. de var. lect. Nov. Testam. Sect. 24, 25, 26, 64.* and more particularly in his preface to Boden's *Evang. sec. Matthæum ex vers. Æth.* I shall only make a short extract from those pieces.

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Chrysostome

Chrysostome, in his second homily upon Job, attests, that the Ethiopians had in his time a version of the Bible, and as none but the printed one can be produced, though some have without grounds asserted the contrary, it must be admitted, that this version is of great antiquity. From the frequent confusion of words, which sound alike in the Greek, but have not been confounded by any other translator, it follows that this version was done immediately from the Greek. The authority of it is therefore great in determining various readings, especially as it so often agrees with the Alexandrine manuscript. The translation of the gospels has succeeded best, but, in the other books, the translators seem to have dreamed, or not to have been equal to the work.

This version was first published at Rome in 1548 and 1549. The editors had a manuscript of the Acts very imperfect, of which they supplied the chasms from the Vulgate; hence the Ethiopic version of the Acts is of less use in determining the various readings of the New Testament. Walton printed this Ethiopic New Testament from the Romish edition in his London Polyglot; but his copy being illegible in some parts, the editors filled up those passages as they thought fit. So that the Romish edition has a just claim to the same authority as if it were the only one extant. The Latin translation annexed was done by Dudley Loftus, and revised by Castellus, but as it is very indifferently done, Milne and others have been frequently misled, in extracting readings from it.

The public has been very much obliged to M. Christoph. Aug. Bode for collating the Ethiopic gospel of St. Matthew with the Greek text, and publishing it with excellent notes. It is to be wished that the same gentleman would continue his work through the other books of the New Testament. It would be of great utility to

future

future critics, who may be unacquainted with the Ethiopic tongue.

SECTION LVII.

Of the age of the Armenian Version.

THERE is an old Armenian version of the New Testament, but as I am not master of that language I must have recourse to others for my account of it, and chiefly to Simon's *Hist. des vers. c. 16.* Milne's *Prolegom.* Schroder's *Diff. de Antiquitate et fatis linguæ Arminicæ*, in his *Thes. ling. Arm.* published at Amst. in 1711. Le Long *Bibl. sacr. T. i. p. 136*; the preface of the two Whistons to their edition of *Historia Moses Chorenensis*; the history itself; and the *Thes. epist. la Croze*, which excellent book I have found particularly useful.

The Armenians had in the earliest times no letters of their own, much less a translation of the Bible into their language. They made use in writing of the Persian and Syriac, or the Greek letters; and Simon conjectures, that their religious worship was in the Syriac tongue. (See also *Renaudot de perpetuo ecclesiæ consensu. T. ii.*) But when Christianity was introduced in all Armenia, in the third century, by command of King Tiridates, learning, the usual attendant of Christianity, was soon propagated along with it. In the fourth and fifth century Miesrob invented letters, which were fully expressive of the Armenian tongue.

And to this same Miesrob the Armenian church unanimously confesses herself obliged for a translation of the scriptures. He lived about the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century, and the version is said to have been finished in the year 410. This is attested by *Moses Chorenensis*, a disciple and assistant of Miesrob; who adds, that he began his translation with the Pro-

verbs of Solomon. Moses Choronenfis was himself one of Miesrob's assistants in the work, though he makes no mention of himself; for Schroder observes, that in a letter he apologises for the shortness of his history, by pleading, that his time was so much engaged in the translation of the Bible. He imagines, that Moses out of mere humility omits his own name; but herein he is mistaken. Moses, in p. 299. of Whiston's translation, is speaking of the first version, in which he did not assist; but p. 312. he mentions his having assisted in the third version. This Moses lived in the fifth century, as Whiston shews in *Thef. la Croze*, T. i. p. 352, 361. iii. 281. The critics, and particularly the learned La Croze, have hitherto been convinced by the internal character, and the readings of the Armenian version, that the Armenians do not pretend it to be more ancient than it really is.

But whether it was taken from the original Greek text, or from the Syriac version, hath not yet been clearly decided. Simon is of the latter opinion, because the Armenians made use of the Syriac tongue in their worship; but La Croze in a letter, which Beaufobre and Le *Enfant* have inserted in their preface to the New Testament, p. 212, objects to him, that he was ignorant of the Armenian tongue, and not a proper judge of the question. On the other hand, La Croze being partial to the Armenian tongue, in the knowledge of which he excelled other learned men, magnifies this version as the queen of all the rest. Hence his testimony may be suspected as partial, when he denies it to have been taken from the Syriac. We will therefore set aside these authorities, and examine the arguments themselves, by which means we may be able to determine the point with more certainty than hath yet been done.

This much is certain on one side, that the Armenians themselves pretend, that their version was done from
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Syriac. Le Long in his *Bibl. sacr.* allegdes for this the testimony of Coriun, who mentions in the life of Meisrob, that Meisrob sent Eznic and Joseph to Edeffa to translate the holy scriptures from the Syriac. But this is not pertinent here; for by the holy scriptures is not meant the Bible, but the fathers of the church, as appears plainly from Moses Chorenensis, B. iii. c. 54. p. 200, which is material to the purpose: "He (Meisrob) returned from Iberia to Armenia, and found the great Isaac (the Patriarch of Armenia) employed in translating from the Syriac, because there were no Greek manuscripts extant: For all the Greek books had been burnt by Meruzan (a Persian governor, who was an enemy to the Christians, see p. 271 — 273.) and the Persian governors would not even suffer the Greeks, who lived in their part of Armenia, to make use of any other than the Syriac tongue."

This passage is so plain, that I wonder no one hath hitherto cited it. It is moreover certain, that there are readings in the Armenian version, which are not to be found in any known manuscript or version, except the Syriac; for instance, the addition, Mat. xxviii. 18, "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you."

But there is another passage in Moses Chorenensis, as much overlooked, which clears up the doubt. In B. iii. c. 61. p. 313, he writes thus: "Our translators returned (from the Council of Ephesus) and delivered to Isaac and Meisrob the letters and decrees of this assembly, together with a copy of the Bible carefully written. When Isaac and Meisrob had obtained this, they cheerfully bestowed the pains of translating that again, which they had translated twice before. But as they were deficient in knowledge, many things were done imperfectly; they therefore sent us to the famous school at Alexandria to learn this excellent language."

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Here is a full and credible account of the care which the Armenians took in translating the Bible, and that they rendered it twice from the Syriac, and the third time from the Greek. It is therefore not matter of wonder, if this version proved a good one, and surpassed all others, for it was a case which verified the Proverb, That he sees farthest who stands upon the shoulders of another. And this likewise accounts for the many variations in this version from the Syriac.

Had this treasure been transmitted to us without any alteration it would have been inestimable ; but time and superstition have prevented this. The churches in the lesser Armenia, i. e. in Cilicia, subjected themselves to the Pope in the thirteenth century. Haitho, King of Armenia, about that time, from 1224 to 1270, was a superstitious prince, and condescended before his death to become a Franciscan Friar. This king provided a new edition of the Bible, and as he understood Latin, and was entirely devoted to the church of Rome, he corrected or corrupted the Armenian edition, in some respects, according to the Latin Vulgate. He translated, for instance, all Jerom's prefaces, and as the words of 1 John v. 7. were not in the oldest Armenian manuscripts, he seems to have added them from the Vulgate. For thirty-seven years after his death this passage is quoted in the council which was held in Armenia, and it is to be found in other Armenian records. See Galani Concilia, B. i. p. 436, 461, 478, and Thes. epist. La Croze, p. 4. and 69. This excites a suspicion, that possibly Haitho followed the Vulgate too closely in other passages ; and yet all the manuscripts of the subsequent centuries were derived from his edition.

SECTION LVIII.

Of the printed editions of the Armenian version.

THIS version was not known in print, till Bishop Uscan published it in the last century. Simon relates, p. 198, that much confusion had crept into the copies, and at the same time, the Bible was become so scarce in Armenia, that a single copy cost 500 rixdollars. Hence a council of Armenian bishops, who were assembled in 1662, ordered the Bible to be printed in Europe. I remember to have read in the last and complete edition of Chardin's travels, that Uscan intended at first to print it in France, but he was not permitted, he therefore only caused a liturgy to be printed at Marseilles, which besides was very much altered. This is one of the passages which the Papists have struck out of the first editions of Chardin's travels. Uscan at last printed the Armenian Bible, 1666, and the New Testament separately, in 1668, at Amsterdam. The edition was a very fine one, but La Croze and Mr G. Whiston, charge him with having sometimes corrupted the Armenian text. This much is certain, that he did not find the passage 1 John v. 7. in his manuscript; for Sandius in his interpretat. parad. p. 376, affirms, that he saw the manuscript from which the Amsterdam edition was taken, and that it wanted that verse. In like manner John v. 4. is wanting in the manuscript, and yet it stands in Uscan's edition; and La Croze observes, in his letter to L'Enfant, that Uscan himself acknowledges in his preface, that he had altered some things from the Vulgate. However La Croze treats Uscan more equitably *, in supposing that his mistakes

* See Whiston's preface to Moses Chorenensis, where we have some remarkable instances of the readings in the Armenian New Testament.

takes did not arise from an intention to deceive, but from superstition and ignorance.

SECTION LIX.

Of the Persic Version.

THERE are two Persic versions of the four gospels. Walton has printed the most ancient and the most esteemed among the learned, in his Polyglot, together with a Latin version by Sam. Le Clerc. Thomas Graves has added notes, which are the seventh part of the sixth volume of the Polyglot. It is certain, and Graves himself observes it, that this is a translation of the Syriac versions; for it sometimes even retains Syriac words, and subjoins a Persic interpretation; and in other places confounds the meaning of words which have a similar sound only in the Syriac language. The only use of it therefore with respect to the New Testament is this, that it here and there discovers some false readings which have crept into the Syriac version since that time. To this might be added, that the Persic omits passages, which are not wanting in any other manuscript or version, except only the Syriac; for instance, Mat. xxvii. 46. Mark vii. 34. However, I am not sure that the Persic translator did not sometimes look into the Greek text; for in Luke i. 3. he calls Theophilus, "Most faithful Theophilus," which wrong translation could not arise from the Syriac word *ܬܝܘܢܝܐ*, but might be taken from the Greek *καταξιωτος*, which generally signifies Optime. It is this Persic version from which Milne and Bengelius draw extracts of various readings.

There is another Persic version of the gospels, which was begun to be committed to the press in the year 1652. by Abr. Wheloc, and finished after his death by Pearson. It was published at London, and the editor had made use

of three manuscripts. It is thought to be much more modern than the other; and I find in L' Long's Bibl. sacr. that Wheloc pretends it was an immediate translation from the original Greek text, but that Renaudot judges it to be an offspring of the Syriac version.

The same Renaudot mentions, that the other manuscripts vary much from these two versions, and that the Persians used in their public worship another version, which was probably the most ancient. If this should hereafter be made public, we shall receive more benefit from it than from both the others.

There are some other Asiatic versions, which I pass over: For I know no more of the Iberian and Georgian, than what is mentioned by Le Long in his Bibl. sacr. The rest being modern are foreign to our purpose. Such are the Turkish New Testament, the six editions, partly of single books, and partly of the whole New Testament in the Malæan tongue, the Formosan Matthew and John, some Chinese fragments of the New Testament, and the Tamulian or Malabar Bible. They may deserve a place in ecclesiastical history, but not in an introduction to the New Testament, which may be full as well understood, and the readings as judiciously decided, without knowing that these versions ever existed.

SECTION LX.

The Latin is the mother of almost all the European Versions.

WE now turn from Asia and Africa to Europe. The Latin is the most ancient and the best of all the European versions; it may even pass for the mother of all those which have been done in the west. For though many of these were taken from the original Greek, yet the translators either had recourse to the Vulgate for help,

or they had in their youth been accustomed to the Vulgate, or to a translation taken from it; so that their versions must necessarily in some degree depend upon the Vulgate, unless it was their design to innovate. Although I cannot strictly call them natural daughters of this version, yet they have, as it were, been under her discipline. The French, Italian, and Spanish Bibles, which were published before the sixteenth century, and of which Simon gives entertaining accounts in his *Hist. Crit. des vers.* were done wholly from the Latin. So the old German Bibles, which were printed before the years 1464, 1467, and 1483, and which partly proclaim it themselves, that they were corrected by the Latin text with great care and diligence. The common versions of the Papists, which have been done since that time, do likewise follow the Vulgate; and though some learned men of that church have attempted more accurate translations into the living languages, yet they have from their youth been accustomed to the Vulgate. Luther indeed translated his from the original text; but it is manifest throughout, that he chiefly made use of the Vulgate, to which he had been accustomed from his youth; and he could not in so short a time have completed so accurate a translation of the Bible, without the helps we have at present, had he not called in the aid of the Vulgate, and obliged himself to vary from it only in those places in which he was assured of its being erroneous. I will not appeal for the proof of Luther's having made use of the Vulgate, merely to the many interpretations, right or wrong, which he has in common with that edition, but to this circumstance, that some errors of his translation arise from a mistake, not of the Greek, but of the Latin words; when, for instance, he renders *ἐπισκεψάμενος*, *to visit*, because he found it rendered *visitare* in the Latin. It is by no means derogatory to the character of the incomparable Luther, that

that he chiefly adhered to this very ancient version; and perhaps the success of his translation at a time, when the oriental languages were not known, and few good comments were extant, may be attributed to his having had before him the best ancient version, of which he amended the errors, but altered nothing without absolute necessity.

From his translation his followers in some respect or other derived most of theirs, not even excepting the English. And it will be needless for me to prove at large, that most of the translators of the Bible of last century and half, have in their early years been accustomed to the Latin version, or to one of the translations taken from it.

SECTION LXI.

Of the Latin version in general.

To proceed methodically, we must first consider the Vulgate before the time of Jerome, and then the Vulgate which was corrected by Jerom. Jerom's Vulgate again is to be considered in three lights: First, as he himself published it; next, as it was again confounded with the old Vulgate after his time, and disguised by many inaccuracies; and in the last place, as it was corrected in the sixteenth century, by the order of some Popes, and introduced into the church of Rome.

Of the ancient Vulgate, before the time of Jerom, see a full account in Simon's Hist. Crit. des vers. du Nov. Testam. in Martianay's Prolegom. to the gospel of St Matthew, which he published according to the old Vulgate; and in Milne, sect. 377—605. We have already observed above, that this version is annexed to the Greek texts of the manuscripts called Borneriana, Clamontana, and Cantabrigiensis. No part of it has

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hitherto appeared in print, but the gospel of St Matthew, and the epistle of St James, which Martianay caused to be printed from two very ancient manuscripts, at Paris, in 1695. I have been assured from Leipzig, that this whole version of the New Testament is to be published by order of the present Pope, for which the Pope will deserve the thanks of our church as well as his own*,

SECTION LXII.

Of the Name, Character, and Age, of the first Vulgate or Italic.

Jerom usually calls this old Latin version, which he distinguishes from his own, by the name of Vulgate. Gregory the Great calls it Vetus, and St Austin calls it Itala. This last is the appellation it is known by at present; and therefore we shall henceforward call it the *Italic*.

It is impossible to determine whose work it was. St Austin says, that several undertook to translate the New Testament into Latin; and we know from the testimony of St Jerom that the copies of the Italic varied widely from each other in his time, whence it should seem that there were several Latin versions. And Doctor Milne proves, sect. 513—605. that the remains we have of it are not done by one hand, but that one translated St Matthew, another St Mark, &c.

I shall here add three observations, drawn from the version of St Matthew and St James, upon the style of the translator, which will at least point out to us his native country.

1. He

* The Pope here meant is Benedict XIV. who died in the year 1758.

1. He sometimes writes such bad and incorrect Latin, that he cannot pass for a native of Rome. For instance, Mat. ii. 16. *Tunc Herodes videns, quoniam illusus esset a magis*; ii. 18. *noluit consulari* (would not be comforted), iii. *tunc dimisit ipsum* (instead of *permisit ipsi*), vi. 16. *exterminant enim facies suas*; 19. *upi ærugo et tinea exterminat*; xiii. 6. *et ederunt fructum* (for *ederunt*) xiv. 1. *benedixit eos*.

2. He has many phrases and constructions of words, which are Latin indeed, but very seldom occur in Latin writers, and seem rather to have been used in speech, than in writing. It is probable therefore, that he learned the Latin more from conversation than from writing; and yet his version is so well done that we cannot pronounce him illiterate.

I will produce some instances of such phrases and constructions of words, and hope my reader is so far acquainted with the Latin tongue as to know, that these phrases are Latin, though they occur but seldom in writing. In Mat. xiv. 1. and xxiv. 6. he makes *Opinio* to signify *Fame* and *Rumour*. v. 32. *dimissam Adulterat*; v. 43. and odies *Inimicum*; vi. 4. in *Abscisso*; vi. 6. vii. 9. 11. *petere aliquem* (to pray); vii. 9. *Alio* in the dative case; vii. 19. *unus Scriba*; ix. 18. *Princeps unus*; xi. 7. *lamentavimus*; xiii. 6. *orto autem sole æstuentes*; xiii. 15. *cluserunt oculos*; xiv. 22. *jussit discipulis suis*; xviii. 24. *decem millia talenta*; James iii. 11. *numquid fons ex uno foramine bullit dulcem et salmacidam?*

All the books of the New Testament in the Italic abound with these remains of the vulgar Latin tongue, and they are preserved from the Italic, in Jerom's version. So that whoever would understand the Latin, not only in its elegancies, but fundamentally and etymologically, must read the Vulgate. For the most ancient words or significations of words, are commonly lost in elegant

writers, whilst they subsist in the mouths of the populace. It cannot at least be pretended, that any of these phrases were foreign, for they must have been actually known at that time in Italy.

3. There are many Hebrew and Syriac phrases and constructions, and in passages where the Greek is pure; which is an evidence, that the translator was by birth a Jew. In Mat. xvii. 15. *frequentur cadit a dæmonio in ignem*. Here a verb neuter is after the Syriac manner made passive; see my father's *Syriasmus*, 128, 129. Mat. xviii. 13. *plus gaudebit in illam*, is the Hebrew construction with the **ל**. James ii. 7. *nonne ipsi blasphemant in nomine bono, quod vocitum est super vos*, is quite a Syriac construction. James v. 16. *ut remittatur vobis*; for to heal a disease and to remit sins are synonymous phrases in Hebrew.

The Italic version is of uncommon antiquity. St Austin mentions, that it was made in the earliest times of Christianity (*primis fidei temporibus*); and if the translators were all native Jews, it must doubtless have been done very early, at the time when the Christian church consisted chiefly of Jewish converts. Hence it is, that some ancient names are written with more accuracy than they would admit in the Greek. For instance, *Καπρινακκμ*, which originally signified **נַחֻם נָבִי** the village of Nahum, because it was the native place of the prophet Nahum, is written in the Latin with ph, *Caphernaum*. *Ἰεσκαρίοτης* is constantly rendered in the Latin as in the Syriac, *Scarioth*, cutting off the first syllable, which had only been added, because the Syrians were not fond of pronouncing S at the beginning of a word, without a vowel. *Χορσιν*, Mat. xi. 21. is called *Corasain* in the Italic, with the termination of the dual number. But I need not enlarge upon this. No man of learning denies that this version was done in the first century, except only Dr Milne, who argues from this, that

in the first century, most of the Christians at Rome understood Greek. But how will he prove, that there were not many of those Christians who understood no more than their mother tongue.

This version, I mean not only the old Italic, but the Vulgate of the church of Rome, which was taken from it, is of eminent use in determining the various readings of the New Testament, not only on account of its antiquity, but of its intrinsic character. The more we examine it the more we shall be convinced from its agreement with the Syriac and coptic versions, and with the most ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, that the translators made use of the best and most ancient manuscripts. It is besides a more literal version of the Greek than any other, though the Latin construction is sometimes erroneous, on that account. Thus Luke xiv. 18. *Cœperunt abuna* (*αρουαις*) *omnes se excuiare*; i. 44. *suscipit Israel pueri sui*; i. 79. *procurante Pontio Pilato Judæ, ix. 14. nihil vos nocebit*. Hence we can better form a judgment what were the original Greek words, than if the translator had taken the liberty to render the original text by elegant language.

SECTION LXIII.

The Old Italic fell into great confusion.

BUT this beautiful version was soon so disfigured, partly by the negligence, and partly by the injudicious care of copyists, that scarce any two copies resembled each other, and it was difficult to distinguish the genuine from the spurious. The errors which crept into this version more than any of the rest were principally three.

1. The expressions of one Evangelist were transferred to another, and the four gospels were converted, as it were, into four harmonies. Jerom in his preface to the

four Gospels complains thus ; “ Magnus siquidem in his
 “ nostris codicibus error inolevit, dum quod in eadem
 “ re alius Evangelista plus dixit, in alio, quia minus
 “ putaverint, addiderunt : vel dum eundem sensum alius
 “ aliter expressi, ille qui unum e quator legerat, ad ejus
 “ exemplum cæteros quoque æstimaverit emendandos.
 “ Unde accidit, ut apud nos mixta sint omnia, et in
 “ Marco plura Lucæ atque Mathæi, rursus in Mathæo
 “ plura Jonnis et Marci, et cæteris reliquorum, quæ aliis
 “ propria sunt, inveniantur.”

2. The copyists transferred into the text those explanations, or oral traditions, concerning the history of Christ, which they found written in the margin. Hence the Latin version contains many things more than the original Greek. See *Milleri diss. de notabili additamento ad Mat. xx. 28.*

From these two observations it follows, that the Latin version must be ever suspicious when it contains more than the other versions or Greek manuscripts ; for instance, *Mat. v. 22.* But in other respects, and particularly when any thing is omitted which we find in the Greek manuscripts, this ancient version is most highly valuable. See *Mat. vi. 13.*

3. As there were several Latin versions they were liquidated into one by injudicious copyists, and passages were transferred from one version into another. Hence it became so very unlike to itself, that Jerom, in his preface to the gospels, writes ; “ Si Latinis exemplaribus
 “ fides est adhibenda, respondeant : quibus ; tot enim
 “ sunt exemplaria pæne, quot codices.”

SECTION LXIV.

It was in high esteem among the ancients, and Harduin even pretends that it was the original text.

THESE were the circumstances of the Italic version at a time when it was in the highest esteem in Europe. For as Latin was the only language allowed in Roman judicatures, that language became known in all the provinces of the Roman empire, and at length banished the ancient language of the people out of Gaul and Spain. Now as the Greek became gradually less known, this Italic version was introduced into all the western provinces of the Roman empire, and the authority of the city of Rome increased the reputation of the Roman version. Some ignorant men so exaggerated the merit of it, that they pronounced the Greek text to have been corrupted whenever it varied from the Italic. This was done by the heretic Helvidius, as appears by Jerom's piece against him, and by Hilary in his comment. in ep. ad Gal. which is preserved in St Ambrose's works. However, the most learned fathers, and particularly St Jerom, have very earnestly opposed this error.

But the greatest idolater of the Latin version is the celebrated Jesuit Harduin, in his comment. in Nov. Testament. He prefers the Latin version not only to all our present Greek editions, but to all Greek manuscripts that ever existed; and believes it to be authentic, or an original text, in the strictest sense of the word. For he believes that the Apostles wrote none, or very few, of the the books of the New Testament in any other language than the Latin. He argues, that the Latin tongue was known throughout the Roman empire; and that Corinth and Philippi were Roman colonies. Hence he concludes, that at least the epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and
Philippians,

Philippians, together with St Luke's books, were written in Latin. But admitting that they wrote some epistles in Greek, (which he thinks a very doubtful point), he tells us a strange story of St Paul's translating these epistles into Latin whilst he was in prison at Rome, or causing them to be translated, and delivering them to the church of Rome; but the genuine Greek epistles, he pretends, are lost, and those now extant are only translations from the Latin. He alledges no evidence in proof of this, but thinks his future adversaries sufficiently answered by the Socratic question, "Why will they not believe him?" He sometimes expresses himself so indeterminately, that one would almost imagine he was speaking of the Latin version published by Jerom. But this being too extravagantly absurd, since Jerom himself declares, that he corrected the Latin version by the Greek, and doth not pretend it to be more than a version; I will take it for granted Harduin means the *Italic*.

In this case I know no better method of confuting him, than by asking him, in St Jerom's words, what Latin version he means, since every copy of the *Italic* became a new edition; for the present Vulgate, which we have from St Jerom, lays no claim to the character of an original, but has been corrected from the Greek text. I would further ask him, upon what grounds he contradicts the united testimony of ancients and moderns in an historical fact. For though he appeals to some moderns, and pretends that they agree with him in opinion, Dr Baumgarten has evinced the contrary in his *Vindiciæ T. Gr. Sect. 9—11*.

I will state his arguments, though some of them are too weak to merit an answer.

1. "The Latin tongue was better known in all the provinces of the Roman empire than the Greek."

But

But Harduin cannot deny, that Greek was the language of Greece, and of the Lesser Asia, and that the Roman colonies, which were sent to Corinth and Philippi were under the necessity of learning Greek, in order to converse with the natives of the country. So that this argument is far from reaching to all St Paul's epistles. Egypt had at that time not been long in subjection to the Romans. Now as the language of the Jews in Egypt had been Greek before, (which appears from their version of the Old Testament into Greek) it was impossible that so short a reign, as that of the Romans had been, about the time of the Apostles, could bring the Greek language into disuse; so that Harduin's argument will not affect the sacred books written in Egypt by St Luke. The Jews in general, who lived in the Roman empire, were wont to converse in Greek; for they were come into the remoter provinces, chiefly from the Lesser Asia, Greece, and Egypt, and had brought with them the Greek language, which was preserved among them by the use of the Septuagint; so that the epistle of St James vanishes out of Harduin's catalogue of Latin writings of the Apostles. And as all the Christian churches consisted originally of Jews, his argument loses much of its force, even with respect to the gospel of St Mark, which was written for the Italians, and the epistle of St Paul to the Romans. However, with respect to these books, there is great weight in Baumgarten's answer, sect. 12. that the Romans themselves very commonly spoke Greek. He proves this partly from Juvenal, Sat. vi. ver. 138—190

“ — — — se non putat ulla

“ Formosam, nisi quæ de Tusca Græcula facta est.

“ Hoc sermone pavent, hoc iram, gaudia curas,

“ Hoc cuncta effundunt animi secreta, quid ultra?

“ Cocumbunt Græce.”

partly

partly from the many Greek words in Cicero's epistles. Add to this Suetonius's history, from which it appears, that one half of the most familiar letters and conversation among the Romans were in Greek. See his *Vita Claudii*, c. 4.

2. Harduin alledges, that "Many of the names of persons who are mentioned in St Paul's epistles, are Latin; such are Tertius, Rom. xvi. 22. Caius, ver. 22. Appia, Philem. 2."

3. That "As God foresaw, that the Latin tongue would in after-ages become more general, it is probable that he dictated the New Testament in that tongue." See Baumgarten's answer to this, sect. 13. 14.

4. That "The Latin style of the New Testament is smooth and elegant, whereas the Greek is rough and uncouth; consequently the latter is a translation, and not the former."

It was bold effrontery thus to assert what appears at first sight so grossly false. The Vulgate is written in popular Latin, and abounds with inelegancies; whereas the Greek style of some books of the New Testament is pretty good, and in some parts very elegant.

5. "We are told, that "The Greek New Testament sometimes contradicts the doctrines of the Catholic church."

6. That "The Latin books were more easily collected together in the single city of Rome, than the Greek ones could be from cities so very remote." See Baumgarten's answer, sect. 17—20.

7. "That the Greek manuscripts vary greatly from each other; whereas there is no variation between the editions of the Vulgate." See an answer to this above, in sect. 63; or the reader may find an answer in the manuscripts of the Latin version still extant; for those which contain the Italic, not only vary extremely from the present Vulgate, and from each other, but whoever
has

has inspected the manuscripts or editions of the Vulgate, from the twelfth to the fifteenth century, will be convinced that they vary more from each other than the Greek manuscripts.

But perhaps it was not so much Harduin's design to extol the Latin text as to discredit the Greek, and along with it the whole New Testament, for which purpose he has selected very insufficient arguments.

SECTION LXV.

It was corrected by St Jerom.

POPE Damasus was induced by the great confusion which prevailed in the copies of the Italic, to employ St Jerom in correcting it; and among all the Latin fathers, before and after that time, none was better qualified for the work. St Jerom completed this useful task about the year 384; and he says himself at the end of his catalogue, *de Scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, "Novum Testamentum Græcæ fidei reddidi." Fabricius Stapulensis, and others, have indeed understood this only of the gospels; because he says, in the preface to the gospels, "Hæc præfens præfatiuncula pollicetur tantum quatuor Evangelia codicum Græcorum emendata collatione." But Simon rightly observes in the seventh chapter of the *Hist. crit. des vers.* that Jerom, in his letter to Marcellus, complains of those persons who preferred the old version to his new one; and he mentions that he is there speaking of St Paul's epistles; and farther, that the Vulgate, after the time of Jerom, was manifestly different from the old Italic in all the books of the New Testament, so that we must conclude that Jerom undertook this task for the whole New Testament.

Jerom

Jerom partly expunged the false and erroneous readings of the Italic, and partly corrected some translations which appeared to him to be wrong ; though he seems also to have corrupted some, with a good intention. He perpetually refers to the original Greek text, as the touchstone by which the translation must be tried. However, he acknowledges himself, that he did not attempt to amend all the errors, but only the most important ones ; which accounts for his sometimes explaining a passage differently in his commentary, from the sense of it in his version. But we shall find in the sequel that the present Vulgate of the church of Rome doth not agree entirely with St Jerom's version ; and perhaps this may be the reason why it sometimes disagrees with that father's commentary.

The two learned Benedictine monks, Martianay and Pouget, published the genuine version of Jerom from a neat manuscript at Paris, 1693, and prefixed to it their excellent Prolegomena, to which, and to Simon, chap. 7——12, I refer my reader for a more full account of it, and of the present Vulgate, than the nature of my work-permits me to give.

SECTION LXVI.

The fate of the Vulgate after the time of Jerom.

ST JEROM's correction did not immediately supersede the old and uncorrected version. Many considered the labour of this learned father as a blameable innovation ; and the Popes did not at least prohibit the old version, but returned for answer to Leander bishop of Seville, " Sedes Apostolica, cui præsideo, utraque translatione utitur." This was carried so far, that the Anglo-Saxon version was done from the old Italic, not from the corrected Vulgate. In process of time the copyists in-
terminated

termixed the two versions with each other, which was occasioned by this, that Cassiodorus caused both to be transcribed in parallel columns against each other, and the manifest errors of the Italic to be corrected from Jerom's version; and though Charlemaign ordered Alcuin to provide better copies, yet the Vulgate fell into great confusion again after his time, and was moreover blemished by many inaccuracies of the transcribers. Hence the manuscripts of the middle ages, and the first printed editions, are very much unlike each other.

Robert Stephans was the first who remedied this confusion, by publishing the Latin New Testament from ancient manuscripts, in the years 1543 and 1545. This edition was indeed rejected and prohibited by the Papists, on account of the errors which they charged him with having interpersed; but Jo. Hentenius notwithstanding made very good use of it. He collated several more manuscripts of the Latin version, and in the year 1547 published a new and correct edition of it, under the inspection of the divines of Louvain. This was farther corrected by the divines of Louvain, partly from manuscripts, and partly from the original text; and in 1573 a new edition of the Bible was published at Louvain, more correct than any preceding one. This was done in consequence of an order of the Council of Trent; that council being desirous to have the readings of the Vulgate examined and ascertained. This edition of Louvain was afterward again corrected at Rome, and a new edition was printed in the Vatican, which became the standard for all Catholic impressions, and is considered as authentic throughout the church of Rome. Simon having given an account at large of these editions, I refer my reader to him.

SECTION LXVII.

How the Vulgate is considered by Papists and Protestants.

THE church of Rome and the Protestant church consider this Vulgate in a very different light. Some extol it too highly; others depreciate it too much, and speak with contempt of an ancient and excellent version, upon the emendations and editions of which so great care and pains have been bestowed; few preserve a due medium.

The church of Rome is obliged to treat this version with the utmost veneration, since the Council of Trent, in her sixth Session, hath declared the same to be “Authentic, whenever the Bible is publicly read, and in all disputations, sermons, and expositions.” The words are somewhat ambiguous, and in the Latin run thus:

“Insuper eadem sacrosancta synodus considerans, non
 “parum utilitatis accedere posse ecclesiae Dei, si ex omnibus
 “Latinis editionibus, quae circumferuntur, sacrorum
 “librorum, quanam pro authentica habenda sit,
 “innotescat: statuit et declarat, ut haec ipsa vetus et
 “vulgata editio, quae longo tot saeculorum usu in ecclesia
 “probatam est, in publicis lectionibus, disputationibus,
 “praedicationibus, et expositionibus, pro authentica
 “habeatur, et ut nemo illam rejicere quovis praetextu
 “audeat vel praesumat.”

Some bigotted divines of that church conclude from hence, that the Vulgate is free from all error, and that no one is at liberty to vary from it in a translation or exposition. But the more sensible part do not subscribe to this, and interpret the words in a more moderate sense. Authentic, say they, doth not signify Infallible, but legal

gal; and the council doth not even declare this version to be authentic in all cases, but only in public reading, disputations, sermons, and expositions, i. e. no other version shall be read in the church; and as the council observed no errors in this version, which might lead us to other doctrines of faith, that doctrine is pronounced to be proved, which is proved from thence, and no one is to deliver any exposition from the pulpit which he doth not find written there. The words being thus explained, the Council of Trent did no more than every church has a right to do with respect to a translation which contains no errors of faith; and that church is particularly justifiable in giving this preference and no more, to an ancient and excellent version. However, I confess that there is an ambiguity, not only in the word *authentica*, but in *publicis*, whether we consider it as the adjective to *lectionibus*, or severally, to *lectionibus*, *disputationibus*, *prædicationibus*, et *expositionibus*. Whoever is engaged in controversy with the Romish clergy, should acquaint himself thoroughly with the Vulgate, and diligently investigate the real sense of its phrases, for he may best extract the truth, and confute his adversaries, from that version. But this demands more application, more knowledge of the Latin tongue, and of Christian antiquity, and a more intimate acquaintance with the fathers, than is generally thought by those, who think it a superfluous good work to give this fine version a cursory reading, and that with reluctance, once in their lives.

As the church of Rome magnifies the merit of this version, so it has been much undervalued at the beginning of the sixteenth century, by some learned, and afterward by some half learned Protestants. For at the revival of learning three centuries ago, when to write elegant Latin was the highest accomplishment of a scholar, many held this version in contempt, merely from the prejudice of its being written in bad Latin. And when

Greek manuscripts were discovered, men were continually disposed to prefer their readings to the Latin, because the New Testament was written in Greek, and the Latin was only a version; but they did not consider, that these Greek manuscripts were modern, in comparison of those original manuscripts from which the Latin was made; and they knew not at that time, that the more ancient the Greek manuscripts and the other versions were, the closer was the agreement betwixt them and the Vulgate. But since F. Simon has clearly proved this, and made it the chief object of his learned *Hist. crit. du texte des Versions du Nov. Testam.* to point out the real merits, and the preference due to the Latin version; our ablest critics, among whom I reckon Alline and Bengelius, have changed their opinion, and allow to the Vulgate the first voice in determining the readings of the New Testament. At least a reading is then most probable, when it stands in the Vulgate, in the Syriac version, and in one or two of the oldest Greek manuscripts, (the Vatican, for instance, or Alexandrine), which have not been altered from the Latin version. But the subject is so copious, that the limits of my book will not suffer me to enter upon it.

SECTION LXVIII.

Ulphilas translated the Bible into Gothic.

I HAVE altered my opinion of the Gothic version, since I wrote concerning it above, in sect. 15. I had a year's interruption in writing this book, and in the mean time have seen the solid arguments which La Croze advances, to prove, that the Gothic version is not now extant. But whoever desires to see the common errors, and the accounts and extracts from the pretended Gothic version, may find them in Marshall's *Observationes de versione*

versione Gothica; Heupelii diff. de versione Gothica Evangeliorum, and Le Long Bibl. S.

It is certain, that Ulphilas, a bishop of the Goths or Getæ, who, after having passed the Boristhenes, settled in Wallachia, translated the Bible into the Gothic tongue. Philostorgius tells us, Hist. eccles. lib. ii. chap. v. that Ulphilas, or Urphilas, or Vulphila, for the name is differently spelt by the ancients, was a Capadocian by birth, and lived in the year 26. Constantine the Great is said to have held him in great veneration, and to have called him the Moses of his time. It is commonly thought indeed that Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, contradict Philostorgius, because they place him in the reign of Valentinian and Valens, and consequently in the year 365. But I do not clearly discern the contradiction. From 326 to 365 are no more than 39 years. Now supposing him to have been forty in the year 326, it is not impossible that he might live thirty-nine years longer.

This Prelate, who was an Arian, greatly enriched the Gothic language by inventing letters, according to Philostorgius, and deserved highly of his countrymen, by a translation of the Bible. He only omitted the books of the Kings; apprehending, that the warlike spirit of his people might be incited to extravagancies by the relation and approbation of so many wars. Walfred Strabo, who lived in the ninth century, tells us, that this version was still extant in his time. His words deserve to be repeated here; "*Gothi et Getæ eo tempore, quo ad fidem Christi, licet non recto itinere, perducti sunt, in Grecorum provinciis commorantes, nostrum, id est, Theotiscum sermonem habuerunt. Et ut historię testantur, postmodum studiosi illius gentis divinos libros suę lucutionis proprietatem transtulerunt, quorum adhuc monumenta apud nonnullas habentur.*"

SECTION LXIX.

The history and editions of the Codex Argenteus.

THE Swedes have flattered themselves, and till the time of La Croze persuaded all nations, that their Codex Argenteus of the four gospels is a reliet of the Gothic Bible. This Codex Argenteus is written upon vellum of a violet colour, with silver letters, from whence it took its name. The initial letters are golden. The strokes seem in some respects to resemble Greek more than Latin. This book was heretofore bound up very irregularly, but Junius reduced it to order, on which occasion it appeared to have many chasms, which Le Long mentions very carefully.

Perhaps this book would never have passed for Gothic, had it not fallen into the hands of the Swedes, among other spoils, in the long war of thirty years; and had not they in a manner naturalised it. They brought it to Sweden, but by what accident is not known, it made its way again into the Netherlands. But M. Gabriel de la Gardie having again purchased it for 600 rixdollars, presented it to the library at Upsal, where it now is. The Swedes are remarkably ambitious of attributing to themselves every piece of antiquity they meet with in foreign countries. It was probably owing to this laudable and public spirited weakness, which however deserves no better name, that they pretended this to be a Gothic version, and printed as such.

There were three editions of it. The title of the first runs thus: "Quatuor D. N. Jesu Christi evangeliorum
" versiones erantiquæ quæ Gothica scil. et Anglo-saxo-
" nica: quæcum illam ex celeberrimo codice argenteo
" nunc primum de promissis Fr. Junius, hanc autem ex
" codicibus manuscriptis collatis emendatius recudi cura-
vit

“ vit Thomas Marshallus, Anglus, cujas etiam observa-
 “ tiones in utramque versionem subnectuntur. Accessit
 “ et Glossarium Gothicum, cui præmittitur Alphabetum
 “ Gothicum, runicum, &c. opera ejusdem Fr. Junii.
 “ Dordr. 1665.” The text was printed in the same
 characters in which it stood in the manuscripts. It was
 reprinted at Amsterdam in the year 1684. In 1671 it
 was printed with Roman types at Stockholm, together
 with the Swedish-Gothic, the Islandic, and the Vulgate.
 And if I am not mistaken, there is at this time a design
 on foot in Sweden of another corrected edition of the
 pretended Gothic Gospels.

SECTION LXX.

*The Codex Argenteus is not a Gothic but a Frankish
 version.*

Hicks was the first who doubted of this being Bishop
 Ulphilas's version ; and the celebrated M. La Croze has
 exploded the common opinion in a full and very learned
 letter, which is printed at the end of Chamberlayne's
 orat. domin. in diversas omnium fere gentium linguas
 versa ; and in the Thes. epistol. la Croizian, T. iii. p. 78.
 David Wilkins did indeed again patronise the former opi-
 nion, but he supported it by very indifferent arguments ;
 and I find in the Thes. la Croz. that Bayer, who was a
 competent judge of the matter, decided in favour of La
 Croze. As Wilkins at least is in very few hands, I will
 here recite the substance of what was alledged on both
 sides.

I. The Codex Argenteus was first discovered in the
 Abbey of Werden, in the county or mark of Westphalia,
 which county the Goths never inhabited, nor even ever
 passed through. Hence the place at least where it was
 found grounds no presumption that the version was a
 Gothic

Gothic one, but rather that it was a Frankish one, since the county of Marck appertained to the most ancient kingdom of the Franks.

Wilkins in his answer to this shews how easy it is to doubt of any thing, by pretending that it is his opinion, the Goths might have been in the county of Marck, though he recollects no evidence of it; and then he suggests, that this manuscript might perhaps be brought from the south of France into the county of Marck. But La Croze did not argue from its being in that county, that it could not possibly be Gothic; he only concludes from thence, that it ought not to be received as Gothic, without a more narrow examination, but should rather be supposed Frankish, from being found in the territory of the ancient Franks; which is a closer argument, than that alledged by Wilkins.

2. As the letters of the Codex Argenteus are very much like the characters of the ancient Franks, which we find in Mabillon's diplomat. again grounds a presumption that this is a Frankish version.

Wilkins admits this, and thinks the Gothic and German characters are very much alike. I cannot therefore conjecture, why in his learned conceit, he chose to call a gospel, which was found in Germany, Gothic, and not German.

3. It is alledged, that as Ulphilas lived in Valachia, and among the Greeks, he probably wrote the Gothic in Greek, and not in Latin characters; whereas in the Codex Argenteus we find the Latin letters, F, G, H, R, S, O, Q, and the small Latin d; it is therefore not to be esteemed a Gothic version.

I lay no great stress upon this argument. For as many Italians settled in Valachia, and the present language of that country is derived from the Latin, Ulphilas might make use of Latin characters.

4. It appears from Gregorius Turonensis, that Chilperi King of the Franks, introduced four new letters into the language of that people, three of which occur in the Codex Argenteus.

I have not room to repeat all that is said by both sides on this head. Wilkins's answer hardly deserves to be translated: for he proves against La Croze, that the Goths had letters before the time of Chilperic, which La Croze never denied. He only denies, that there are Gothic letters in the Codex Argenteus.

There are two arguments alledged to prove, that the Codex Argenteus is Gothic; but both have been sufficiently refuted by La Croze.

1. "It is said to agree with the Swedish language." But it is well known, that this language differs little from the old German, and particularly from that of the Franks.

2. "It contains Greek letters." But it appears from Julius Cæsar, that the Gauls had Greek letters, and the Franks received their alphabet from them.

I am at a loss for words to express my astonishment at the ignorance and folly of Wilkins, who in the following words appeals to the ancients, and pretends to prove from them, that the Codex Argenteus is Gothic; "Tot reperio auctores veteres fide dignos hoc asserentes, ut Socratem, Sozomenum, Nicephorum, Isidorum Hispalensem, in Gothorum Chronico." These several authors affirm indeed that the Goths had a version of the Bible, but does it follow from thence, that the Codex Argenteus, of which they neither speak, nor had ever heard, contains that version?

I therefore conclude this version to be Frankish, and shall treat of it as such in my next section.

S E C T.

SECTION LXXI.

Of the Frankish Version.

M. LA CROZE has advanced some conjectures, which render it probable, that the Codex Argenteus was written in the reign of Chilperic, i. e. between the years 564 and 587. We learn from Gregorius Turonensis, that Chilperic ordered four letters to be adopted from the Greek, α , ψ , Σ , Δ , which were to express the sounds *a*, *ae*, *the*, and *uni*. A mistake seems to have crept into this account in transposing *ae* and *the*; for ψ could never be introduced as the mark of a vowel. Now we find these letters in the Codex Argenteus, except only the α ; and as this grammatical folly of Chilperic was ridiculed in France, it is hardly credible, that the Codex Argenteus was written after his death; but we must place it in a time when this ridiculous law was still in force. Add to this, that the letters A, E, V, F, G, and S, appear in the same form in the Codex argenteus, as in the other remains of the times of Chilperic, which we have in Mabillon. He starts the doubt indeed to himself, that Otfried, who lived towards the end of the ninth century, says, "*Linguae hæc (Francica) veluti agreßtis habetur, dum a propriis nec scriptura, nec arte aliqua, ullis temporibus est expolita.*" But he answers, that Otfried might perhaps speak of the East, and not of the West Franks. But I am of opinion, that the doubt may be better solved. Otfried doth not deny, that the Franks had books in their language, or that they could write; he only denies, that they derive these from their own countrymen. For the Franks received their letters from the Gauls, having been before an uncultivated people.

This

This Frankish has the advantage of other western versions, in being done immediately from the Greek. Bengelius proves this in his *Indrod. in crisin. Nov. Testam.* p. 408. against Wettstein's proleg. by the following arguments :

1. The author of this version has mistaken and misinterpreted some Greek words, by changing one or more letters, which are rightly rendered in the Latin. Thus in Luke vii. 25. he reads τροφη instead of τροφα, and John xvi. 6. *πιπρωκεν* for *πιπληρωκεν*.

2. He follows the order of the Greek words exactly, even against the rules of construction. Mat. xxvii. 43. *Θεου ε'μι υιος*, Goths *im funus*, whereas the Latin has it *Filius Dei sum*.

3. He retains in the Frankish the Greek terminations of some words, such as *Γαλιλαζιας Ιουδαιας Ιεροσολυμων*, Luke v. 17.

4. He varies much from the readings of the Vulgate. He has the conclusion, for instance, of the Lord's prayer, and omits the story of the adulterers. See further instances of this, and an answer to Wettstein's arguments, in Bengelius.

This version is therefore of considerable use, in a collection of the various readings in the New Testament, especially as the translation is very accurate. It is very seldom that the liberty is taken of adding any thing to prevent a misapprehension. In Luke i. 3. for instance, is added to *ε'ξοι χαμοι*, *jahahni veihamma*, i. e. And to the Holy Ghost. Besides all this, whoever applies himself to the German, or to any of the languages in affinity with it, will consider this version, as an inestimable piece of antiquity, it being the first German book we have.

SECTION LXXII.

Of the Anglo-Saxon Version.

THERE are more than one Anglo-Saxon version of the New Testament extant in manuscripts, of which the fullest account is in Le Long's Bibleoth. S. Some books of the Bible were translated by Bishop Eadfrid, and the gospel of St John by Beda. But there is no evidence that King Alfred translated most of the books of the New Testament for his people. Hitherto only some parts of the Anglo-Saxon New Testament have been published, and particularly the four gospels, by Matthew Parker, William Lisle, and Thomas Mareshall, in the years 1634, 1571, and 1665, and this Anglo-Saxon version is manifestly taken from the old Italic. It is therefore of particular use in discovering and determining the readings of the Italic and the Vulgate.

SECTION LXXIII.

Of Literal and Fluent translations of the Bible.

I SHALL not take a view of the other more modern western versions, as the knowledge of them is not very material towards rightly understanding or settling the original text. The principal ones, those I mean, which were, and still are, made use of by whole nations, are mentioned in ecclesiastical history; and others, which have been published by more modern literati, deserve a place among the commentators, when they have explanatory notes; but without these, they are not equivalent to a comment, being only declarations and opinions of the editor, unsupported by proofs.

I shall only add, that there are two kinds of translations, literal and fluent.

1. Literal translations are those, in which it is proposed to express the original text verbatim, notwithstanding the obscurity of many phrases, and the inelegance of many constructions, in the language into which the book is translated. It is expedient that the translations, which are intended for the public use of a whole church, should be of this kind. For in these the translator should presume as little as possible to obtrude his interpretation, if it be in the least exceptionable, upon a whole church, for he is a man, and subject to error. If he doth not render verbatim certain phrases which admit of more than one sense, he delivers, instead of the word of God, an arbitrary interpretation of his own, which may chance to be false. The same consideration obliges the translator to render all ambiguities in the original text, if possible, by words equally ambiguous, in order to leave to his reader the choice of that sense which appears to him most probable.

It is folly in translations of this kind to study elegance of style, and so incur the hazard of laying before the church a doubtful exposition, instead of the pure word of God. For as public translations of this kind must be kept in use for some centuries, without an alteration; and as the taste of a language varies almost with every generation of men, those beauties of style are soon decayed. Perhaps there is not a version, of which the style is less artificial, than that of Luther; and yet it contains many words which are now disused, and some of them unintelligible.

Literal translations are moreover the fittest to be joined with a commentary or paraphrase.

2. Fluent translations are such as render the sense of the Bible, by such phrases and constructions, as are most

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pleasing in our language. These are the best for the private use of those who desire to read the Bible without further comment.

SECTION LXXIV.

Of the Apocryphal books of the New Testament, and why we reject them.

WE come now to those individual books inspired by God, which together are called the Canon of the New Testament, because they contain a rule of faith and manners. We receive them as divine writings as unanimously transmitted to us by the primitive church, which was best qualified to judge of them. But this testimony of the primitive church is not the principal, nor the only ground we have to believe their divine inspiration.

There are, besides these, various books still extant, which some superstitious persons, or even heretics, have considered as divine, and falsely ascribed them to Christ himself, or to his Apostles, or to their disciples. (See Fabricii Codex apocryphus Nov. Testam. which is a collection both of the accounts and fragments of these books. Each of these pieces has had its idolater, and some secret enemies to religion have reproached our church for not submitting to the divine authority of books which have the assent of antiquity. But Mosheim refutes this charge in his Vind. ant. Christ. discipl. and observes, that the assent of the ancients is not sufficient, that the unanimous testimony of the whole church is requisite, and that the same is wanting to these apocryphal books. Besides, the matter depends not upon heretics and their assent, nor upon the assent of laymen, but the Doctors of the Christian church. I must confess indeed, that the unanimous testimony of the primitive church is wanting to some of the books which we account canonical;

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such are the epistle to the Hebrews, the second and third of John, the second of Peter, the epistle of Jude, and the Revelation. But all doubt on this subject will be removed if I may be allowed to anticipate an observation which will be made in the sequel, that we do not receive most of the books of the New Testament as divine, chiefly because the primitive church declared them such, but because they are written by Apostles. After premising this, I need not fear to alledge the several reasons why we do not receive the apocryphal books, notwithstanding the assent of some of the ancients.

1. Most of these books abound in manifest fables and absurd doctrines, inconsistent either with reason or with those books of which we know for certain, that they were written by the Apostles, and confirmed by miracles; insomuch that we must reject them as fictitious, or at the least, as mere human writings, it being impossible for a divine Revelation to deliver falsehoods.

2. Some have so few, and such doubtful attestations of the ancients, that they were written by this or that Apostle; and are contradicted by so many and powerful testimonies, that we cannot but consider them as forgeries; and the moment this is acknowledged, the pretence of their divinity falls to the ground.

3. Some writings (for instance, St Paul's epistle to the Laodiceans, and to the Corinthians, which the two Whistons have annexed to the history of Moses Chorenensis) contain indeed nothing demonstrably false, but they do not agree with the genius and way of thinking of those to whom they are ascribed. We know St Paul to be a rational writer, who has always the end of his writings in view; whereas in the epistle to the Laodiceans we find no particular end proposed, but only a general spiritual miscellany; and in some of these spurious epistles we meet with none of that strong reasoning which distinguishes St Paul's writings. They are a mere

rhapsody, composed of the phrases of his other epistles, and not more similar to his style and sentiment, than a school-boy's imitation is to the writings of Cicero.

4. Some of these writings being lost, we cannot form a perfect judgment of them; and though we may conclude from the character of the other pieces, which have never been able to obtain the assent of the whole church, that those were of the same kind, and did not merit the approbation which they could not obtain from the church, yet we need not in fact concern ourselves about them; for whether they were divine or not, we are no longer possessed of them; and we have no need of them, for it was not the pleasure of God to preserve to after ages all the words which the Prophets of old were inspired to speak. At least the book which his providence hath suffered to be lost cannot be to us a rule of faith and manners.

In short, these books are either ascribed to the Apostles, or they are not. If the former, then we must judge by the laws of historical and critical probability, whether they came from the hands of the Apostles. But if they are pretended to be divine, without ascribing them to an author, whose divine inspiration we either know, or may presume, then not even the unanimous testimony of the whole church would suffice to convince us, much less a partial testimony.

These are the grounds upon which we reject certain books, and call them Apocryphal. The reasons of our rejecting the genuine epistles of Clemens Romanus, notwithstanding the probability of his having had the gifts of the Holy Ghost, will occur in the sequel.

SECTION LXXV.

The Church of Rome rests merely upon the Church in proving the divinity of the New Testament.

BUT a question remains to be answered ; Why do we believe those books to be divine which are in our editions of the New Testament, and reject the rest ?

The church of Rome has an easy answer to this question, but it is pity that the answer is neither solid nor satisfactory. She appeals to the testimony of the church, meaning the church of Rome, which is infallible, as well as her supreme head. There are secret foreshadowings in the answer ; for the ancient and modern church of Rome sometimes contradict each other ; the ancient, for instance, rejects the epistle to the Hebrews, which the modern admits. But I will not touch these foreshadowings. I only lament that there is no evidence of the infallibility of the church of Rome, and that it cannot be proved by argument, that there never was a time when a whole church was capable of committing an error through infirmity. However the writers of the church of Rome value themselves highly upon the pretence, that Protestants must at least admit the authority of the church in determining what books are divine ; and that we contradict ourselves if we do not admit this authority in the church in other respects.

I shall endeavour to throw some light upon this confused subject. In order thereto, I shall lay down, and prove, three marks as characteristical of the divinity of a book. The book which has all, or any of these marks, is to be accounted divine.

SECTION N. LXXVI.

The first Criterion of the divinity of a book is Miracles.

1. "THE book which is written by one who pretends, that either all his writings, or at least, this in particular, are divinely inspired, and corroborates such pretence by Miracles, is to be accounted divine." No one can deny this position, without denying in general, that there is any divine Revelation; and I would undertake to prove it even to one who denies this. In order thereto, I must make a short digression into Philosophy.

I shall not take the word Miracle in its strictest sense, of an immediate operation of divine Omnipotence, or of an effect, for which there is not an adequate cause in the whole chain of contingent beings. This would indeed facilitate the proof of my point, but it would at the same time become impossible ever to prove a miracle. For as there may be, and are, spirits, which almost infinitely surpass human creatures in power, and as we are much too ignorant to determine, only with probability how far the Power of these Spirits extends, we can never affirm with certainty, that any thing is an immediate operation of Almighty God; and of the greatest operation we must acknowledge the possibility, that it may proceed from some very powerful spirit, who yet belongs to the class of contingent beings.

I mean by a Miracle, "an effect which cannot be derived from the laws of motion in the material world, and at the same time surpasses all power of man; (eventus præter naturam, humanas vires superans); so that no human understanding can distinguish, whether it proceeds immediately from God, or from those finite spirits, which are greatly superior to us." I am
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authorised in this idea of Miracles by the holy scriptures, which ascribe some of the miracles, to which they appeal, not immediately to God, but to angels, who execute his will. See *John* v. 4. and i. 51. where Christ thus describes the miracles which he intended thence forward to perform; "Hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

Miracles are the only sign by which God can declare his revelations to be divine, and distinguish them from the pretences of Impostors and Enthusiasts. For it is not sufficient that a pretended revelation neither contradicts reason nor itself; since in that case every consistent natural Theology might set up for a divine revelation. Either therefore God must make it impossible for himself ever to give a revelation to man, or to lay any commands upon us, which philosophy doth not already discover to us to be his will; and he must at the same time discharge us from all obligation to obey a command, or to believe an assurance revealed by him; or he cannot permit a finite being to perform miracles or supernatural works in attestation of falsehoods. If this were permitted, it would immediately become impossible to men to distinguish between a real and pretended divine revelation, and consequently they could never be obliged to believe or obey a divine revelation. And is it credible, that God would discharge man from this duty to himself by permitting false miracles, especially as a nearer revelation from God is so expedient to man? If moreover we consider, that many malicious miracles would be performed in the world, if a spirit at enmity with God and us, had the power of working miracles; and if upon consulting experience we find, that no such miracles are wrought, that all the stories we hear of witchcraft are only human impostures, or of credulity or superstition, we shall be the more clearly convinced, that no deceiving spirit is permitted

permitted by God to work miracles. As therefore man cannot perform miracles or acts above the power of man, and as God doth not permit evil spirits to perform them, it follows, that a revelation confirmed by miracles is divine.

SECTION LXXVII.

Consequently all the writings of the Apostles are divine.

The Apostles of Jesus Christ were the authors of most of the books of the New Testament which we account divine. I have already observed of them in sect. 4. that they pretended to be more than prophets, and assure us, that Christ promised them a divine inspiration when they spoke in defence of his gospel. How much more in their permanent writings! I shall make some closer observations here, in order to shew that the Apostles, and particularly St. Paul, boast of a divine inspiration in their writings.

The Apostles mention, that Christ promised them a most plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost, that he should abide with them for ever, John xiv. 16, 17. that he should testify thro' them, and reprove the world, xv. 26, 27. xvi. 7—11. that he would shew to them what Christ had left unsaid whilst he was with them, xvi 12—15. It is evident, that the Holy Spirit spoken of in these passages meant, not the sanctifying gifts of the Holy Ghost, but a divine inspiration, as in Thess. v. 19. If Christ ever promised this, and the Apostles do not deceive us; if we only allow them the weight of human testimony, it follows, that they were moved by the Holy Ghost, whenever they testified of Christ.

Our Saviour carried his promises further, even to an inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in things of which they might naturally obtain a knowledge. They might know by the natural powers of memory, what Christ had spoken

ken to them; yet he notwithstanding promises, John xiv. 26, that the Holy Ghost shall not only teach them all things, but bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he had said to them. It is observable, that in all these passages the Holy Ghost is called their advocate (*παράκλητος*.) According to the connexion, he cannot mean their advocate with God; for he represents him as their advocate with man, when they were to testify of Christ and convince the world. When therefore Christ saith, "your advocate the Holy Ghost, who pleads for you before men, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance;" his meaning is plainly, that he will do this when they shall bear witness to the doctrine of Christ before men. If this promise of Christ be true, then the Holy Ghost brought to the remembrance of the Apostles all things whatsoever Christ had said unto them when they undertook to draw up a life of Christ, or to write a gospel.

All these assurances Christ confirmed by miracles, which are recorded by credible persons and eye-witnesses; by miracles, which are confessed by the ancient adversaries of the Christian Religion among Jews and Heathens, and which they only attempt to invalidate, by representing them as magic. These assurances therefore, and all their consequences, are to be accounted divine truths. Whatsoever therefore the Apostles witness in writing concerning Christ, is inspired by God, whether it be doctrine or fact.

The Apostles moreover affirm of themselves that these promises have been fulfilled in them, and that the Holy Ghost was poured out upon them, Acts ii. 15—18. St Paul boasts in general, that he did not receive his gospel of men but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, Gal. i. 11, 12. 1 Cor. ii. 10. and he spoke things which were freely given him of God, in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, ver. 13. even in giving a piece of advice which

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was not strictly a command of Christ, he claims a regard to his advice by adding that he had the spirit of God; i. e. that he delivered it as a Prophet; 1 Cor. vii.

40. When he wrote any thing, which others disputed, who thought themselves Prophets, he told them, it was their duty to follow him, and if they were true Prophets, they would acknowledge that the things he wrote unto them were the commandments of the Lord; 1 Cor. xiv.

37. I might produce more of these passages from the rest of the Epistles, but these few will suffice to convince any one, that St Paul declared himself to be a Prophet, and his writings divine. It is amazing effrontery to pretend, that St Paul did not desire to pass for a Prophet but merely for a teacher.

The Apostles have supported this pretence of the divine inspiration of their words and writings by undeniable miracles; (Sect. 3.) consequently we are bound to honour all those writings which proceed from them, as divine books. This proves the divine authority of the gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, and of all the Epistles. If any of these epistles are denied to have been written by their real authors, in that case we need only inquire into the truth of the charge, and as soon as we have shewn the Epistles of St. Paul to the Hebrews, that that of Jude, the two last of John, and the second of Peter, to have been written by those Apostles, we have proved their divine authority. As I cannot here enter minutely into this proof, I refer my reader to Lardner's credibility of the Gospel history, where he will find a collection of testimonies of christian writers of the two first centuries, who mention the books of the New Testament, and ascribe them to the very same Apostles who are the received authors of them at present. There remain only four books of the New Testament to which this argument doth not extend; the Gospels of Mark and Luke, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Revelation of St. John.

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SECTION LXXVIII.

The second Criterion Prophecies fulfilled.

My second criterion is this; "When a book, which
 "pretends to be divine, contains circumstantial prophe-
 "cies, which have been fulfilled, and not a single false
 "prophecy can be shewn therein, that book must be re-
 "ceived as divine, unless it contradicts natural religion."
 I must explain this proposition, before I enter upon the
 proof of it.

1. By prophecies I mean, "a prediction of such events
 "as no human understanding could foresee." If any
 thing foretold, which a prudent man might foresee
 would happen, if, for instance, in the time of the Empe-
 ror Charles the Sixth, it had been foretold, that a bloody
 war would arise after his death; this is no prophecy, and
 cannot evidence the divine mission of the pretended pro-
 phet. If again any one prognosticates revolutions in the
 Planets, which may be calculated, this doth not prove
 him a messenger from God. Admitting, that no one
 else is qualified to calculate them, yet it follows not that
 he is a Prophet, but that he perhaps understands Astro-
 nomy better than others.

2. The prophecy I mean, is not of a single point, but
 a circumstantial prophecy. If, for instance, Isaiah had
 foretold nothing more than in general, that Babylon
 would be destroyed the completion would not have pro-
 ved him to be a Prophet; for it was possible, that a false
 Prophet might fortunately chance to foretel a thing which
 might afterwards happen. But when many circumstances
 are foretold, it is incredible that the prediction should
 accidentally happen to be minutely accomplished.

3. But as it is possible that many circumstances might
 accidentally come to pass, the characteristic of a Prophet

is, that not one of the circumstances he foretold remains unaccomplished. For if this should be the case he would stand convicted of a falsehood, and therefore could not be a messenger from God. For instance, one Drabicius, in his *Lux ex tenebris*, foretold many circumstances which punctually came to pass, in the last war, about the Austrian succession; but as he saw some things in his imaginary vision which were not fulfilled, (such as the Elector of Saxony's becoming possessed of Bohemia in the course of the war) he is not to be accounted a Prophet. It is not necessary indeed, that all the prophecies of a divine book should have been already fulfilled; for they may be fulfilled hereafter. But if a prophecy which ought to have been already fulfilled, remains unfulfilled, we have a right to reject the Prophet.

Upon these conditions I assert, that prophecies fulfilled are a very probable evidence of the divinity of a book. It cannot be denied, that many future events depend upon so many thousand unknown causes, and may be prevented or changed by so many unexpected incidents, that no one is qualified to foresee them with certainty, except only that great Being who surveys all the innumerable minutiae of the world, which are interwoven and intangled with each other. I do not except the greatest angel; for whilst he is a finite spirit, he cannot survey the whole world, which would require faculties that are infinite. What spirit, for instance, was great enough and wise enough, to know for certain, in the time of Isaiah, that Cyrus would be born, and would be a Prince of such superior understanding, without accurately knowing the most minute circumstances both of body and mind of his then ancestors, and without knowing the reasons why the father of Cyrus, who was not then born, would marry his mother, in preference to so many other women? For had he married another woman, or she another man, or had the single concubitus, in which Cyrus was begot, proved

proved unfruitful, Babylon would never have been taken by Cyrus. What finite spirit could foreknow, that among so many millions of darts as were shot at the army of Cyrus, and whose line of direction depended upon so many imperceptible minutiae, and sometimes even upon a breath of air, not one of them should hit Cyrus, and thereby convert the prophecy of the conquest of Babylon into a fable?

But it is very incredible that a circumstantial prediction should come to pass, in all respects, without exception, by mere accident. If I foretel any thing accidental, without being inspired by God, there is, in the first place, against me, the hazard of its not coming to pass, which is at least equal to the chance of its coming to pass. If I add ten circumstances, any man of understanding will admit, that each circumstance may easily be changed a thousand ways; and each of these possible changes is as probable as the circumstance I foretel. Consequently there is in each circumstance the chance of a thousand to one that my prophecy will not be fulfilled; and in the whole, it is ten thousand to one that I prove a false prophet; and this upon a very moderate computation. But as it is possible that no part of the event foretold may come to pass, it is not even so probable that my prophecy will be fulfilled, as that by having a ticket in a lottery of 10,000 tickets, I shall win the greatest prize, for among the 10,000 one must have the prize, but the event which I foretel may with all its circumstances fail to be accomplished.

But as it is not absolutely impossible, or implies any contradiction, for a pretended prophecy to be fortuitously accomplished, the prophecies which have been fulfilled, are only very probable, not, strictly speaking, a certain evidence, of the divinity of a book. If therefore the book contains any thing contradictory to natural religion this evidence becomes insufficient to prove its divinity. For the doctrines of natural religion rest upon a certainty which takes place of any thing only probable.

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Perhaps my reader may wonder, that I should prove the divinity of some, or rather of a single book of the New Testament by an argument, which I do not advance as certain, but only as highly probable. I trust no man of sense and charity will impeach my orthodoxy on this account; else I should ask, whether the testimony of the church, upon which it is usual to rest the divine inspiration of these books, be not likewise a probable argument? and probable in a much lower degree than mine; or, whether the attestation of the church be as certain as a proposition, the denial of which implies a contradiction? Again, whether the argument, drawn from miracles, be not founded in history? and whether a history of facts, which I have not seen myself, can be mathematically certain to me?

However I fear no censure of this kind from the latter half of the present century. I am persuaded they will only wish for a solution of the doubt, whether a book may be safely and justly received as canonical, of which the divine authority is not evidenced with certainty, but only with the highest degree of probability? I may venture to answer upon logical grounds, that the highest degree of probability differs very little from what is properly called certainty; and that an argument, which is in the highest degree probable, is even thought equal to a demonstration, because our limited understanding is not so subject to err in matters probable, which are generally objects of sense, as in an abstracted demonstration. I know, for instance, with probability, that there was a King of France called Lewis the Fourteenth, who waged great war; and I know for certain, that the aggregate square of the two sides of a rectilinear right angled triangle is equal to the square of its hypotenuse; or I know for certain, that there is a God. Yet I should deserve to be confined as a lunatic, if I entertained the
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least doubt that there was a Lewis the Fourteenth ; or if I do not as confidently believe this probable as the other certain truth.

SECTION LXXIX.

There are prophecies fulfilled in St Paul's Epistles.

IN the New Testament there are only two writers whose divine mission can be proved by this criterion, St. Paul and St. John. But as one of these is the object at which the enemies of religion aim their arrows ; and as the divine mission of the other would be shaken without this evidence, it deserves further consideration. I do not deny that the writings of the Evangelists contain prophecies which have been fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. But as these were uttered by Christ, not by the evangelists, they prove his divine mission, not theirs.

St. Paul has two circumstantial prophecies of the propagation of a certain heresy, which have been fulfilled ; 2 Thess. ii. 1 Tim. iv. I shall consider the circumstances he foretels, in order to shew how incredible it is that these circumstances, which have been accomplished, should accidentally occur to him when he was writing.

1. St. Paul foretels, that one of the errors in vogue at Ephesus in the time of Timothy, that of the Essenes would become much more corrupt, and spread far and wide, inso much that it would produce a great departure from the faith.

Upon a moderate computation, we may reckon thirty heresies or sects which departed from St. Paul's doctrine in the first century. Now that the heresy, at which the apostle hints, should in after times lift up his head, and not one of the rest, was as improbable as one is to thirty, since each of the thirty heresies might have

been propagated as easily. But as it was equally possible that the pure and more rational doctrine of St. Paul, and no heresy, would prevail; or that a heresy then unknown might in time arise and spread very far; as these three cases were equally possible, I must multiply the improbability by three; and then the two propositions, "the doctrine of the Essenes will hereafter occasion a great departure among the faith;" and "it will not produce that effect," are in point of probability, as one to ninety.

2. I will not take in the particulars, that the future sect would forbid to marry, &c. because these being doctrines of the Essenes, are comprehended under the former head.

3. He foretels that this heresy would be propagated by forged miracles and pretended prophecies. It will be easily admitted, that this is not the most common method of propagating a doctrine, for false conclusions are much oftener the means to this end, than pretended wonders. Now as two methods of propagating this sect were possible, and St. Paul fixes upon one of them, it remains only half as probable that this prophecy, supposing it fictitious, will be fulfilled. So that the improbability is to the probability as 120 to 1.

4. This heresy was to be and continue under one supreme head, and so be a monarchy; whereas the Essenes were not at that time under one supreme head.

It happens but seldom that a heresy is, and continues, under the government of one supreme head. Most, if not all, religions and heresies have resembled Democracies and Aristocracies, rather than Monarchies. Perhaps it would be exaggeration to affirm, that there are always 100 sects who have no single supreme head, to one that has. So that the completion of this prophecy, supposing it not inspired, becomes at least 100 times more uncertain, and then the improbability is 12,000 to one.

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5. This supreme head of the sect was to sit in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God; and was to exalt himself above all Kings, and even above the Roman Emperor. This is certainly very extraordinary and almost incredible insolence and fortune in the head of a sect. All history, from the beginning of the world to this present time, will furnish perhaps no more than 100 heads of sects, some of which were but of short duration, and had no successor. Among these not one, besides the Pope of Rome and the Lama in Great Tartary, was ever worshipped as God, or exalted himself above Kings and Emperors; and this last is not strictly the case with Lama. The improbability therefore of this new circumstance is as 100 to 2, or as 50 to 1, and it being thus fifty times more uncertain for this prophecy to be accidentally fulfilled, the whole improbability will be to the probability as 900,000 to one.

It is therefore at least as improbable that St Paul's prophecy should be fortuitous without divine inspiration, as that any particular ticket will obtain the great prize in a lottery of 900,000 tickets; and whoever, by denying the divine authority of St Paul's writings, hazards his salvation, in case they should be divine, acts as foolishly as one who in hopes of obtaining the greatest prize among 900,000 tickets, involves himself in such debts, that he is undone, if he miss of the prize. I might say the former acts more foolishly; for among the 900,000 adventurers one must necessarily have the great prize; but it is not necessary, even in the 900,000 worlds, that such a prophecy and the event should accidentally correspond. Whoever is accustomed to calculate chances, will best apprehend this kind of reasoning, and will at the same time acknowledge that my calculation is very moderate.

SECTION LXXX.

Some accomplished Prophecies in the Revelation of St John.

This argument chiefly effects the revelation of St John ; for we shall shew in another work, that this book was not written by St John the Apostle, but by another of the same name ; and though some father of the church have received the Revelation of St John as a divine book, yet the ancients were not unanimous in their testimony to this, and in the time of Eusebius it had not yet obtained a place among the *ὁμολογούμενοι* or books unanimously received.

This whole book contains prophecies. Whoever reads the seventeenth chapter, can entertain no doubt, that one part at least of these prophecies is too punctually fulfilled, namely, that the church of Rome would fall from truth, that she would worship departed souls as deities, and inhumanly persecute the saints. But the question is, whether this book contains not some prophecies unaccomplished and false ?

The book itself testifies, that its completion would soon commence, and as it comes recommended in this manner to its first readers, and pronounces those blessed who understand it, the completion of it must have commenced in the time of his first readers. Whoever therefore imagines, that the very first part of the prophecies, to wit the sixth chapter, is not yet fulfilled, but will be fulfilled hereafter, would act more rationally in not receiving it as a divine book.

Among the several expositions of this chapter, hitherto published, none explains it in an easy natural way, and places the completion of it in a period then approaching, except only that of Grotius, which interprets it of the destruction of Jerusalem. They indeed, who
pretend

pretend, that the Revelation of St John was written in the reign of Domitian, assign a completion near at hand, by pretending, that he that sat upon the white horse is the victorious emperor Trajan. But not to mention, that a horse-man with a bow would be as unnatural an image of a Roman emperor as if he were drawn with a mallet; for the Romans used no bows in war; I would ask, why John pronounced his first readers blessed upon the approach of the completion of his prophecy, if they were only to live to see so much of the completion as relates to the victories of Trajan? Was it so great a bliss to read some years before hand, in an obscure prophecy, that the Romans would be successful in the reign of Trajan, unfortunate in that of Adrian, and even be visited with famine and pestilence under Antonine? So that either Grotius's interpretation is right, or the sixth chapter was not fulfilled in the time and manner which must be presumed from the first chapter. But Grotius must be mistaken, if Irenæus be right, that the Revelation was written in the reign of Domitian. For Jerusalem being then already destroyed, the destruction of it could not be the subject of a prophecy. But if, with Epiphanius, we place the Revelation in the reign of Claudius, then Grotius is justified in his interpretation; and I am inclined to this opinion from the circumstance, that the rulers of Christian congregations were not yet called Bishops, but Angels, after the Jewish manner.

If then the Revelation was written in the time of Domitian, the sixth chapter will be found to contain false prophecies, and so ought to be rejected. If in the reign of Claudius, then we can clearly explain this and other chapters, and we shall be bound to receive it with the utmost reverence, as a divine book. And that the latter is actually the case, I shall shew when I come to treat of that book in particular.

SECTION LXXXI.

The third criterion, the unanimous testimony of the Primitive Church.

IN the last place, as the primitive church was better qualified to judge which books were divine, which not, than we who know not whether the authors were Prophets, whether they pretended that their books were of divine inspiration, or mere human compositions, or what judgment the Apostles formed of the books of their fellow-labourers and disciples; it follows, that "The testimony of the primitive church is of great weight, if we find nothing material that contravenes it." I mean not the partial testimony of some Doctors, but the general assent given to a book by the whole church. For there have always been credulous persons, who have received human writings as divine; but it is incredible, that the whole church of the first century committed an error of this kind, since we know the care with which she distinguished, and sometimes too suspiciously, the canonical from the apocryphal books of the New Testament.

By a general assent, I do not mean the assent of all that ever were called Christians. It is well known that some heretics rejected many books, merely because they contradicted their errors; and these are not to be admitted in evidence at all. I am well aware of the objection which will be made to this by the disciples of Toland. They will plead, "That it ought to be clearly proved from the inspired writings, which party is to be called the Church, which the Heretic. Till this is done, the orthodox and heretics are upon a perfect equality, and have equal pretensions. The testimony of the one is equivalent to the testimony of the other. In
"deciding

“deciding the question therefore, which books are canonical, we cannot confute the heretics from our canonical books; and consequently we cannot pronounce them heretics; and therefore owe them as much credit when they reject our books of the New Testament as we owe to the orthodox, when they assert their divine authority. The Ebonites rejected all our books of the New Testament, and received only a Hebrew gospel of St Matthew, which we reject as spurious. What is to be done in this contradiction? the testimony of the Ebonites is as valid as that of the orthodox. And we must form the same judgment, if many who are called Heretics have rejected St John’s gospel. We must remain in an eternal and insuperable doubt, what books are divine, and what not.”

This is the comfortable doctrine which they mean to establish. But,

1. I deny that the point can be decided only from the writings inspired by God, which party merits the name of the Church, or of Heretics. We have our reason to assist us; and the controversies between the church and some heretics are of such a nature that reason clearly decides them, when, for instance, it rejects the vain conceits of some sects, concerning the Word, and the Only begotten, which tenets contradict the gospel of St John.

2. As to the Ebionites in particular, who rejected our whole New Testament, because the authors of it declare the law of Moses to be abolished, we can convict them of their error from the very books of the Old Testament, which prophecy, that the Levitical law would be abolished in the time of Christ; which argument St Paul actually makes use of, Gal. iii. iv. and Heb. vii. So that we may pronounce them heretics before we admit the divine authority of the New Testament.

3. These

3. These heretics, and particularly the Ebionites, do not only deny those books, whose divine inspiration we believe upon the testimony of the church, such as the writings of St Mark and St Luke, but also the epistles of the Apostles, who have confirmed their divine mission by miracles. They pretend not that these epistles are spurious, but that St Paul was an impostor. But as we can shew the contrary from St Paul's miracles, their whole testimony falls to the ground, and is of no force against the other books of the New Testament.

4. If we make a comparison between the ancient heretics, who reject our New Testament, and the fathers of the church, it will appear how much more safely the testimony of the latter may be relied on.

The former reject either all or some books of the New Testament merely because they seem to them to contain errors; they appeal neither to ancient testimony, nor to principles of criticism, by which the books may be determined spurious; but argue only from the inconsistency between their opinions and these books. The fathers, on the other hand, receive the books as divine, notwithstanding that some of their opinions vary from them: For it need not be mentioned, that the fathers departed very early from St Paul's doctrine.

Which of the two parties deals most equitably? which testimony is most valid? which of the two shall we believe to have received only those books as divine, that were recommended to their ancestors as such by the Apostles? shall we believe those who rejected every thing without other grounds than its contrariety to their opinion? or those who submit to the authority of their ancestors, notwithstanding that it interferes with their own errors?

But besides, though some heretics rejected our canonical books, the majority of them received those books as divine.

But my proposition demands another restriction. If the primitive church had unanimously delivered a book as divine, of which we either knew not the author, or had no other evidence of his being a Prophet, the unanimous testimony of the church would not prove that book to be divine. At least I confess for my part, I should in that case, esteem that testimony doubtful. For though I receive some books of the New Testament as divine without knowing the author, yet it is not because I have an absolute faith in the testimony of the Jewish church, but because Christ and his Apostles have, by their infallible testimony, authenticated the writings which the Jews received as divine. So that my faith is not in that church, but in Christ and his Apostles.

I now proceed to the proof of my proposition. If a book be extant, written by a fellow labourer of the Apostles, of whom we have probable grounds to believe that he had extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, and was a Prophet; it is in some degree probable that his book, which contains a testimony concerning Christ, might be inspired. And who shall lead us to any farther certainty in this matter? They only who lived nearest to his time, and knew whether the book had been pretended to be divine by him or by the Apostles. If they agree in their testimony, and declare his book to be of divine authority, I see no farther reason for not believing their testimony.

SECTION LXXXII.

This criterion applied to the ομολογουμένα.

THE question then is, what books have been unanimously received as divine by the primitive church? I need not collect the several testimonies of the fathers of the two first centuries, that having already been done

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by Dr Lardner ; nor shall I appeal to the councils which determine the canonical books of the New Testament. For though the councils shew what books have been declared divine by a majority of votes, yet we know not how great the majority was, or how large the number of the dissentents. Eusebius gives us the light we want in this matter, in his Hist. eccl. l. iii. c. 25. He divided the books which pretend to a divine inspiration into three classes :

1. *Ὁμολογούμενα*, i. e. those which are universally received as divine. It is in behalf of these alone that I would venture to alledge the testimony of the church, and I need not plead it in behalf of the rest. In this class he places the four gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, all St Paul's epistles, and the first of St John and St Peter. I need no more ; I shall now apply this forthwith to the gospels of Mark and Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles. These books were not indeed written by Apostles, but by such assistants of theirs as I shall shew in sect. 92. to have probably had extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost. The whole primitive church accounted these books divine, and there is not a single father to be named who was of a different opinion. Most of the heretics also acknowledged their divine authority, and I can even except none, but such as believed the most ridiculous gospel or lives of Christ. What room is there then to doubt of this testimony ?

2. *Ἀντιλεγόμενα*, i. e. writings received as divine by the majority, but rejected by some. In this class he places the epistles of James and Jude, the second and third of John, and the second of Peter. My reason for believing the divine authority of these, is not because some have accounted them divine, but because it can be sufficiently proved that they were written by those apostles. If it be said, that this amounts at last to the partial testimony of the church, I answer, that the testimony

mony of the ancients is valid in the matters of history, though it may be exceptionable in matters of opinion: for in historical facts they might know the truth, and do certainly, if they be honest men report the truth; but in their judgment of the divine inspiration of a book they might be mistaken, even if they were the most honest men in the world.

3. *Nεβη*, or spurious pieces, in this class he reckons the Acts of St Paul, the Shepherd, the Revelation of St Peter, the Epistle of Barnabas, and the Apostolical constitutions. He mentions it as doubtful, whether the Revelation of St John, and the Gospel of the Hebrews, belong to this class; and adds, that the spurious pieces are quoted by most writers of the church.

The matter being thus stated, I need not be asked why I do not acknowledge the last class of writings to be divine, and why I receive the *ομολογουμενα* as such? Surely there is a difference between the unanimous and the partial testimony of the church. I need not treat further of these spurious pieces. See an account of them, or of the books which give an account of them, in Fabricius Cod. apocr.

SECTION LXXXIII.

Some doubts removed on this head.

SOME doubts remain to be considered, which have been, or may be made, about the unanimous testimony of the church concerning the divine inspiration of the *ομολογουμενοι*.

1. It is said, "That the fathers were almost all men
" of weak understandings, and particularly incautious
" and credulous in determining what writings were in-
" spired; that this occasioned them to quote in proof of
" their doctrines so many books that are now justly
" deemed

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“ deemed mere human compositions, and therefore we
 “ cannot rely upon their unanimous testimony in so im-
 “ portant a point, after knowing the weakness of each
 “ individual.

2. “ That many of the ancients accounted the writ-
 “ ings of Clemens Romanus to be of divine inspiration,
 “ and we find them even in the oldest manuscripts of
 “ the New Testament, that we cannot deny some of
 “ the epistles of Clemens to be genuine; that he was
 “ no less than Mark or Luke, a fellow labourer of the
 “ Apostles; and that we have the same reason to ascribe
 “ extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost to him, as to
 “ them. If therefore we do not receive his writings as
 “ divine, we must, to avoid an inconsistency, reject
 “ theirs.

3. “ That it is not yet clear, what is the real testi-
 “ mony of the primitive church concerning the *εὐαγγέλιον*
 “ *μάρκα*; whether it delivered them as inspired books,
 “ or only as the uncorrupted writings of holy men,
 “ which deserved to be read in the congregation. The
 “ Gospel of St Mark, for instance, is of the number;
 “ but Eusebius mentions nothing more, than that St
 “ Peter recommended it as a book which might be read in
 “ the church; and lib. vi. cap. 14. he even writes, that
 “ when Mark undertook to write his gospel, St Peter
 “ neither advised it, nor dissuaded from it.”

I shall not quote the authors of these doubts;
 my readers I hope will be satisfied if I remove the
 doubts.

The first has been sufficiently refuted by Mosheim in
 his *Vindiciæ ant. Christi. discipl. adversus Tolandum*, in
 which he shows, that the fathers were not so credulous
 in receiving the sacred books, as they are said to have
 been. For it follows not from the quotation of a book,
 that the divine inspiration of it is acknowledged.

The second objection is obviated by my insisting upon the testimony of the whole church, not of some fathers, in support of the divinity of a book not written by an Apostle. The epistles of Clemens were never reckoned among the *εμολογούμενα*, and I see no reason for putting him upon a level with Mark and Luke: These were Evangelists, and had probably extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost; whereas Clemens doth not appear to have been an Evangelist, but only a disciple of the Apostles, of whom honourable mention is made in Phil. iv. 3. His name indeed was written in the book of life, but it doth not at all follow from thence, that he must have been a Prophet.

But another doubt may be raised, which I shall endeavour to remove. It may be said, that "Even the unanimous testimony of the Church is fallible. If therefore my assurance of the inspiration of Mark and Luke is only founded in the unanimous testimony of the church, concerning a fact in itself probable, then my faith in these books is not certain and unshaken, but rests in probability."

In answer to this, it is to be considered,

1. That our faith is not strictly founded in these three books, which contain not a single doctrine that is not fully taught in the other books of the New Testament. If it were admitted that these three books are no more than human evidence and history, yet the credible facts there related would serve equally to confirm our faith in Christ, as if we received them as divine, because they relate the miracles of Christ and his Apostles; and they contain no new articles of faith.

2. We find among the books which may be tried by another test, not one which the whole church has been mistaken in receiving as divine, but many which she rejected without cause. Hence we justly conclude, that the error of the primitive church in this important

matter, was rather on the side of unjust suspicion, than of credulity; and there is the strongest probability, that she was induced by very cogent reasons to admit the writings of Mark and Luke into the canon. Probably the Apostles recommended them as inspired; and it is owing merely to our invincible ignorance of the church history of the first century, that we cannot determine this matter with more certainty. But I have observed before, that in most cases, and in the most important points, we are obliged to acquiesce in the highest degree of probability, as if it were certain.

SECTION. LXXXIV.

The name and number of the Gospels; and the account of the seeming contradiction of the Evangelists.

THE first book of the New Testament, as it stands divided in the manuscripts, comprehends the four gospels.

The word Evangelium has three significations, which it is necessary to distinguish; a secular, a biblical, and an ecclesiastical signification. The bare confusion of these has been the occasion of errors. Some, for instance, by confounding these senses, have been led to ascribe a gospel to St Paul, and to pretend that he dictated St Luke's gospel, because we read, Rom. ii. 16. "According to my gospel." In the profane Grecian authors, *euaggelion* signifies any joyful tidings; but in the New Testament it is confined to the sense of the glad tidings of the actual coming of the Messiah; and is even opposed to the prophecies concerning Christ. Rom. i. 1. 2. So St Mark writes, i. 1—4. The beginning of the gospel was John; and our Saviour thought the enquiry of John who he was, sufficiently answered, when after referring him to his miracles, he adds, the poor have the
gospel

gospel preached to them; i. e. the coming of the Messiah is proclaimed to the poor; Matt. xi. 5. The church has given a new sense to the word, by giving to the Lives of Christ the name of Gospels. This is the ancient and modern title of the four gospels, and the ecclesiastical name of the authors is that of Evangelists.

I shall not now take upon me to determine, why the number of the gospels is four, and not three or five. Some of the fathers have in their way accounted for it from the four winds. But though I have no opinion of any mystery in the number, I apprehend that the history which was to be the ground of our faith, was for wise reasons related by more than one witness. It adds credibility to so important a history; especially as the several historians plainly appear not to have consulted each other. St Luke seems not to have read St Matthew at all, else he would have avoided the seeming contradictions, and in the genealogy of Christ at least, which he relates so differently from St Matthew, he would have inserted a word or two to account for this difference, which every reader finds it so hard to reconcile. If St John had read the former Gospels, as I believe he had, yet he relates very few things in common with them, and even in these, he seems not very solicitous to avoid contradicting them. If we only compare John vi. 21. with the other Evangelists, and John xix. 14. with Mark xiv. 25. we shall observe that the seeming contradiction might have been avoided by a single word, if St John had taken any pains to agree exactly with the other Evangelists.

These seeming contradictions among the Evangelists, which however are reconcilable, are no blemish, but rather a considerable advantage to us, as they afford us an argument that they did not write in concert. When several persons agree in forging a history, they will take

care to avoid mutual contradictions; and if the first disciples of Christ had invented his miracles, and the other important circumstances of his life, St John would have been particularly cautious not to vary from his predecessors. The very inattention of the Evangelists to this point, is a satisfactory evidence, that they were conscious of writing the truth.

When several persons report the same facts, of which they were eye-witnesses, without borrowing them from another hand, it is impossible to avoid some seeming contradictions. I appeal to any experienced lawyer, whether he would not suspect the truth of an examination, in which twenty witnesses had given exactly the same answer to the interrogatories? and if they should agree in the language too, there would be ground to suspect that the examiner had drawn up the depositions himself, and either not interrogated the witnesses at all, or had suggested to them the answers, in order to carry his point. And the seeming contradiction of several eye-witnesses is easily accountable, from this circumstance, that each of them did not observe every transaction, but only perhaps a single one, which may perplex the judge or the reader, in reconciling them.

But if the question be repeated more closely, why the number of the Evangelists is exactly four? we must look for the reasons of it, not in the number four, but in other circumstances. That which St Matthew wrote in Hebrew, was abridged and written in Greek by St Mark. These two amount to no more than one witness. St Luke was providentially hindered from reading St Matthew. Thus we have two witnesses who knew nothing of each other; and the world is at liberty to give a separate hearing to each of them, and strictly to examine whether their testimony agrees upon the whole. If both these witnesses of so circumstantial a history, notwithstanding all seeming contradictions, are perfectly reconcilable,

conciliable, without having consulted together, or read each other; then they cannot at least have forged the history, unless we suppose a third to have forged and dictated it to them; but Matthew and Luke stand clear of this suspicion. Who could impose upon them a forged life of Christ, since one of them was constantly attendant upon his person, and the other had a familiar intercourse with many eye-witnesses of the history? To these was added St John, not to increase the number of witnesses, nor strictly speaking as an historian, but as a polemic, who confutes certain errors, from the life of Christ, and at the same time relates his most important miracles and discourses which had been omitted by his predecessors. These are the reasons why Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, wrote their gospels; and hence we have four Evangelists.

SECTION LXXXV.

The seeming contradiction of the Evangelists reconciled in point of time.

ONE of the most frequent apparent contradictions among the Evangelists relates to the circumstance of time, the same fact being reported earlier by one than by another. This apparent contradiction arises from hence, that Matthew, Mark, and Luke, did not write in chronological order.

No historian is bound to relate every thing exactly in order of time, unless he is writing a journal, which is the most tedious and disagreeable kind of history. In writing a perspicuous, and at the same time an agreeable narration of facts, it is necessary sometimes to relate, along with an event, its consequences in after-times, and when the writer reaches these times to return back to the source of it; or he is obliged now and then to connect

connect facts, which are somewhat related, though in point of time they are very far asunder. It is particularly usual in biography to disregard the order of time in relating the most remarkable circumstances of a life. If some of those who have ventured to expound the Bible had not been mere divines, unacquainted with the laws of history, and with history itself, this observation might perhaps have been made long since, and we should have found fewer chronological difficulties in the Evangelists. It is to be wished, that the divines would venture into the midst of the field of sciences, and not survey it merely from their own cell. But it is owing to the want of such true divines, and to the implicit submission, with which able men have followed their half-learned predecessors, that an opinion has prevailed that the Evangelists must have written journals in chronological order, which opinion has produced the many difficulties complained of in them. Some have even pretended to prove that St Luke meant to write a journal from chap. i. 3. where he promises to write *κατά τάς*, in order, as if the only order in writing were chronological order, which hath not been perfectly observed by any of our greatest and most celebrated historians. Mariana, for instance, often breaks through it; but who will pretend, that this excellent Spanish historian did not write in order? Now the Evangelists write much in the same order as other historians. To illustrate this by a clear instance; the unction of Christ at Bethany took place six days before the Passover, John xii. 1. yet St Matthew xxvi. 6. mentions it after he was advanced in the rest of his history as far as two days before the Passover. The reason is, that on that day Judas offered the assembly of the Chief Priests to betray Jesus, which was occasioned by the anointing of Christ, for Judas was imbibed by the rebuke he then received, and resolved upon revenge.

SECTION LXXXVI.

Some principles towards reconciling the chronological contradictions.

As harmony of the Evangelists is a book, whose object is to remove the seeming contradictions of the Evangelists, and so to point out the true chronological order of the facts they relate. Whoever would execute a work of this kind with success, must observe the three following rules;

1. As the Evangelists did not write journals, he must not esteem it a contradiction if the same fact be reported earlier or later by one than by another, provided there be no precise and express intimations of the time by which they contradict each other.

In opposition to this rule, a certain * harmonist of the Gospels asserts, that whenever the same miracle is recorded with the same circumstances, in a different order of time, by different Evangelists, they are different facts. Thus according to his opinion, the whole series of facts in Matt. ix—xi. happened at least twice, if not thrice; i. e. Jesus twice healed a man sick of the palsy, who was let down through the tiling, with exactly similar circumstances; he in both cases spoke the same words, and the spectators were affected in the same manner; twice, immediately after such miracle, he called a disciple from the receipt of customs; he twice raised a female child of twelve years old from the dead, and by the way healed a woman, who had an issue of blood, by her touch of his garment; he was twice asked the same questions by John, &c.

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* The Harmonist here mentioned is M. Hauber a German divine, who not being known here, and his work being written in German, it was thought needless to translate the arguments against him at large.

If any other biographer should so circumstantially relate the same transactions twice, or pretend, that a whole series of extraordinary events happened twice in the space of four years, he would forfeit all credit with his reader. A solution of this kind, however well meant, tends to the prejudice of the Gospel, in the eyes of friends, as well as enemies.

2. As a divine inspiration did not convey omniscience, it is possible, that one Evangelist might not know the circumstances of a fact, which were known to another. This ignorance occasions the appearance of a contradiction in cases where there is no real contradiction. For instance, Christ embarked in a vessel, and rebuked the wind in the evening of the same day on which he had delivered the parable of the sower and the seed. This appears from Mark iv. 35. But this circumstance being unknown to St Luke, who knew no more than that these two transactions were at no great distance from each other, he writes, chap. viii. 22 "Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship." This is no more a contradiction, than if one of two witnesses to the same fact should testify, that it happened in the Christmas week, and the other, on the twenty-fifth of December. But that it is possible for prophets to be ignorant of some things, and that the Apostles never pretended to be omniscient, see in 1 Cor. i. 16. 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3. Mark xiii. 32.

3. Different facts may be very much alike, and yet not be the same. It is necessary carefully to distinguish these. Thus the anointing of Christ, Luke vii. and Matt. xxvi. are manifestly different facts, and agree only in this, that both happened at table, and in the house of one named Simon. But as it was usual among the ancients to anoint at table, it is not even a remarkable circumstance that this happened at table. And all the other circumstances are different.

SECTION LXXXVI.

Account of the principal Harmonies.

We now proceed to an account of those who have taken pains to reconcile the four Evangelists, and to reduce their history to chronological order; which will at the same time give us occasion to mention some commentators upon the Gospels. It would be needless to enumerate all the harmonies. See an alphabetical list of them, which is not very imperfect, in Fabricii Bibl. Græc. l. iv. c. v. §. 20.

Tatian, and Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, wrote an harmony, so early as the second century. The pretended harmony of the former was published by Ottomar Luscinius in the year 1523; and Michael Melmer in 1524 published a pretended harmony of Ammonius of Alexandria. But though both pieces are of undoubted antiquity, their genuineness is very disputable. See Fabr. apocr. cod. Nov. Test. p. 578.

Eusebius undertook an excellent work of this kind. He divided the history of the gospels into ten canons, which we find prefixed to many editions and versions of the New Testament. In the first canon he recites, according to the ancient chapters, those transactions, which are related by all the four Evangelists. In the rest he states the facts which are related.

2. by Matthew, Mark and Luke.
3. by Matthew, Luke and John.
4. b. Matthew, Mark and John.
5. by Matthew and Luke.
6. by Matthew and Mark.
7. by Matthew and John.
8. by Luke and Mark.
9. by Luke and John.
10. by only one of the four Evangelists.

I shall not detain my reader longer with these ancient harmonies, or with those of the middle ages; they being not much in use, and learned men contenting themselves with being able to reckon up their names, without ever consulting them. But I must at least mention Ludolphus, *de vita Jesu Christi*, and Gerson's *Monotessaron de concordantia Evangelistarum*.

The famous Andr. Osiander published the first edition of his harmony of the Gospels in the year 1537. He took for granted the principle, that the Evangelists wrote always in chronological order, and that the same transactions and discourses happened twice or thrice in the life of Christ. Hence we may form a judgment of his work. He is at the head of those who have discredited the Gospel-history by their harmonies. However he went not so far as his successors, but sometimes departs from his principle.

Corn. Jansenii *Commentaria in concordiam Evangelicam*, 1571, is also a comment upon the Gospels.

Martin Chemnitius wrote a voluminous harmony of the gospels, which was continued by Polycarp Leyser and John Gerhard. It was first published in 1593, and the last Hamburg edition in 1704. It consists of three volumes in folio, and is not only a harmony, but a learned comment upon the Gospels. He follows Osiander too closely.

Sam. Craddock's harmony of the Evangelists is a short entertaining and learned comment upon them, published at London 1668. He draws up the gospel-history in an explanatory paraphrase, in English, and adds short and useful Latin annotations.

Bern. Lamy *Commentarius in harmoniam five concordiam Evangelistarum*, is a learned book, and a comment upon the gospels.

John Clerici *harmonia evangelica*, is a very useful book. He has in general right ideas concerning the harmony

mony of the gospels, which he sets forth in a dissertation annexed. He places the history of the four Evangelists in chronological order, parallel to each other, in Greek and Latin; and a Latin paraphrase underneath removes the seeming contradictions.

Whiston's short view of the chronology of the Old Testament, and of the harmony of the four Evangelists, deserves particular notice. He is of opinion that the Evangelists kept an accurate journal, and constantly observe the order of time, except only one passage; but that the difference between St Matthew and the other Evangelists arises from hence, that the chapters from the fourth to the tenth have been miserably jumbled by the copyists. He endeavours to support this opinion by this, that St Mark, who abridged St Matthew's gospel, observes a very different order from that which we now find in St Matthew. I have not room to consider this matter at large.

Jo. Reinh. Rus harmonia Evangelistarum, &c. published at Jena in 1727, is a book remarkable chiefly for a needless ostentation of learning.

Bengelius in his harmony of the four gospels, published in 1736, proceeds upon better principles, and maintains, that the Evangelists did not write merely in chronological order.

This last and Whiston's are the most useful works of the kind, for they contain the best account of the grounds of the different opinions among the harmonists. My limits will not permit me to mention all those who have endeavoured to remove, or have removed single contradictions of the Evangelists:

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SECTION LXXXVIII.

Of St Matthew's name, and the time of writing his Gospel.

ST MATTHEW'S Gospel was written before the other three. His name in Hebrew is מַתְּתִי, or contracted מַתְּ, not, as some have imagined מַתְּתִי, which would have been rendered *Matthias*, not *Matthæus* in the Greek. He was also called Levi, and was the son of Alphæus; not of that Alphæus or Cleophas, (for these are one name) who was a kinsman and disciple of Jesus, and the father of James, Joses, Simon, and Judas; for we have not the least trace in St Matthew of his being related to Christ. His profession and call to his apostolical office are related Matt. ix. 9. and Mark ii. 14. His converse with Christ enabled him to write a credible history of him.

As he has the first place in all copies of the New Testament, we may conclude him to have been the first of the four Evangelists. If regard had been had to pre-cedency of rank, St John must have been placed first. But they are ranked with a view to the order of time in which each of them wrote. Eusebius affirms, that this gospel was written in the year forty-one, which makes it the first of all the books in the New Testament. He is followed by Euthymius, Theophylact, most of the subscriptions of St Matthew's gospel, and an Arabic life of St Matthew. Nicephorus places it in the fifteenth year after the ascension, i. e. in the forty-ninth year after the birth of Christ. And Irenæus reports, that Matthew wrote his gospel about the time when Paul and Peter preached at Rome, which dates it about the year sixty one. See Mill. Sect. 61—64.

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I must confess, Irenæus's opinion seems to be the most probable, not only as he was the most ancient of those who gave us the circumstance of time, but for other reasons. St Luke seems (as will appear hereafter) not to have seen St Matthew's gospel, when he wrote his own; which is hardly possible, if St Matthew's had then been written twenty-two years, especially as St Luke was in the mean time at Jerusalem. It is besides the common error of the fathers to magnify the antiquity of the writings, rather than to detract from it.

Upon the supposition that St Matthew wrote his gospel about the year sixty-one, we can conjecture the more immediate occasion of it. He wrote in Hebrew, and for the Hebrews; (see Eusebius in hist. eccles. l. iii. c. 24. and 39. l. v. 10. Irenæus adv. hæres. l. iii. c. 1. Origenis fragm. T. 1. comment. in Matthæum; Dorothei Synops. de vita. prophetarum in bibl. max. patr. T. iii. and Epiphanius hæres. xxx. Sect 3). Now the Hebrews suffered, about the time of St Paul's preaching in prison at Rome, a heavy persecution, which almost drove them into apostacy, and obliged St Paul to write his epistle to them. In these circumstances, nothing could be of more expediency and utility to them, than a history of the miracles and of the resurrection of Christ. I am therefore of opinion, that St Matthew's gospel, and St Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, were written with the same view to guard the Christians in Judea from apostacy. And this conjecture coincides with what is mentioned of the occasion of St Matthew's writing, by an anonymous author of the seventh century, the beginning of his imperfect book upon St Matthew. See the Paris edition of St Chrysostom, Tom. vi. p. 11.

SECTION LXXXIX.

St Matthew wrote in Hebrew.

One of the most important questions is, in what language St Matthew wrote his gospel? All the fathers, and all the subscriptions at the end of that gospel, which mention the language, report that Matthew wrote his gospel in Hebrew, for the benefit of the Christians dwelling in Judea. But Hebrew is not meant the language of the Bible, but the dialect in use at Jerusalem, which was a mixture of Hebrew and Chaldee. The Romanists commonly follow the fathers in this, and none of them has discussed the point with so much learning as Simon hist. crit. du Texte du Nov. Testam. chap. 5, 6. He is contradicted by Majus in Examen. hist. criticæ chap. 5, 6. and Schrodter in diff. de linguæ Matthæi authentica, whose arguments we shall consider. Many of our modern divines have embraced the old opinion, Horneius, Calixtus, Hunnius, Danhauer, Meisner, and even the Magdeburg Centuriators; so that this opinion cannot be treated as heretical. But the majority maintain that St Matthew wrote in Greek. Perhaps the chief reason is the groundless prejudice that all the books of the New Testament were written in Greek, and the apprehension of danger from admitting that the original text of an inspired book is lost, and only a translation preserved. But I apprehend we are bound, in an historical question, to give credit to the unanimous testimony of the ancients, unless it manifestly appears to be fabulous. The obligation encreases upon us if we consider, that it is merely from the testimony of antiquity that we know this gospel to have been written by St Matthew, and therefore a divine book. If we refuse our belief to the concurrent testimony of the ancients, how can we justly maintain the

divinity

divinity of this book upon the same testimony? It is a trifling objection made by Majus that it is not so much our concern what the ancients said, as whether they spoke true? This may be alledged in a doctrinal controversy, but in historical facts the testimony of the ancients is valid, unless they testify manifest impossibilities and fables; and their testimony need not be supported by fresh grounds.

Schrodter has very carefully collected all their testimonies, though he takes pains to invalidate them. The first evidence is Papias, who lived soon after the time of the Apostles. His words as they stand in Eusebius are these: *Ματθαῖος μὲν ἑβραϊστὶ διαλέκτο τὰ λόγια συνγράψας, ἑκάστης δὲ αὐτὰ ὡς ᾔκουστο ἐκαστος.* "Matthew wrote in Hebrew, and every one has translated it as he could." Eusebius concurs with him, and the same is reported by Pantenus, Iræneus, Origen, Dorotheus, Athanasius, Cyril, Epiphanius, Nazianzen, Jerom, Chrysostom, Austin, Theophylact, Nicephorus, the subscriptions of the Syriac, Persic, and Arabic versions, and other testimonies of antiquity. Add to these Hegesippus, who lived in the second century, and was wont to quote the Hebrew gospel of St Matthew. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. chap. 22.

The arguments in opposition to this unanimous testimony of the ancients are of no great weight. Schrodter alledges,

1. That Papias was, according to Eusebius, an heretic and a disciple of Aristion, and John the presbyter, and moreover a very credulous writer, who relates a variety of forged miracles.

His character as an heretic doth not affect his credit as an historian, in matters which have no connection with his errors. His relation of many forged miracles is an evidence indeed, that superstition had rendered him credulous, but follows not, that his testimony is in-

valid in matters which he could not be led by superstition to invent. Thus we disbelieve the writers of the middle ages, when they relate the miracles and appearances of saints, for superstition rendered them credulous; but in secular transactions of their time their testimony is valid.

2. "All the subsequent fathers who affirm that Matthew wrote in Hebrew, affirm it merely upon the authority of Papias; so that he and they amount to no more than one witness, and must stand and fall together."

But this allegation is not true. Schrodter appeals to the testimony of Origen, Tom 1. Comm. in Matt.; *ἐν παραδοσει μάλλον Ματθαίου ἐκδεδοκота αὐτὸ γράμματα ἰβρῶν; συντίταχμινον*; i. e. "I know by oral tradition, that Matthew wrote his gospel in Hebrew." But where is the mention of Papias? If we read Origen's words without prejudice, we shall find that he appeals to general report and tradition. Schrodter does not even pretend to prove, but only conjectures of the other fathers, that they blindly follow Papias.

3. "Some witnesses do not testify so much. Nazianzen only mentions that Matthew wrote for the Hebrews, not that he wrote in Hebrew.

A poor evasion this! To write for the Hebrews, is to write in Hebrew; for had he written in Greek, which very few of the Hebrews understood, it could not have been said, that he wrote for the Hebrews more than for other nations. But Nazianzen's manner of expressing himself was owing to his writing in verse, and he could not perhaps bring his thoughts into metre by other words than these,

Ματθαῖος μὲν ὑπεφάνη ἰβρῶν; διὰμνηται Χριστοῦ.

4. "The Syriac subscription imports not that Matthew wrote, but that he preached his gospel in Hebrew."

But to preach, or to speak, in the subscription of the Syriac version, is equivalent to writing, as appears from the subscription to the gospels of St Mark and St John. The phrase might probably arise from the custom of reading books, which were to be published before a public assembly.

5. "There is not a single credible witness, who pretends to have seen St Matthew's Hebrew gospel."

I admit this for the present; but the next section will shew the contrary. But it is not to be wondered if there were very few such eye-witnesses. Most of the ancient fathers were ignorant of Hebrew; and as the Jews hated the gospel of St Matthew, and the doctrine of Christ, it was natural for the Hebrew text to be soon lost. The Hebrew Bible is transmitted to us only by Jews. Without them it must have been lost. But who can imagine, that they would preserve for our use the original text of St Matthew?

6. It is alledged, "That St Matthew translates some Hebrew words, which would have been superfluous, if he had written in Hebrew, and for the Hebrews."

But not to mention that these might be interpretations and additions of the Greek translator, St Matthew wrote not in the ancient Hebrew, but in the language then current in Palestine. This approached nearest to the Chaldee or Syriac, and sometimes required such interpretations, because the old Hebrew tongue varied greatly from it. The objection to the first part of this answer is very weak, that the writings of St Matthew would, upon this supposition, have been corrupted, and lines added, which were not written by him. I could admit this conclusion, if it were a conclusion. If the translator's quoting the original text, and adding to it an interpretation, be a corruption of the text, then the

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Polyglot Bible is a wicked book. But this trifling objection is removed by the second part of my answer.

7. It is argued, "That St Matthew often quotes passages of the Old Testament from the Greek version, not from the Hebrew original, which he would have done, had he written in Hebrew."

But this might be done by the Greek translator, who rightly followed the example of the Apostles, in taking the passages quoted by Matthew from the Greek version, which was generally known, and in every one's hands; even as the Latin translator of Irenæus took the passages of the New Testament, not from the Greek original, but from the Latin Vulgate.

These are the specious arguments alledged against the united testimony of the fathers. The rest are not worthy of a confutation, being either founded in the authority of dogmatical divines, or in the prejudice, that in this case the words of the Greek version are not inspired by God, which I can safely admit, and must admit. For as we receive our canonical books upon the testimony of the primitive church, we cannot justly receive that as divine, which all antiquity unanimously delivers as human. And as all the ancients testify, that the Greek text is not the work of St Matthew, but a translation, we cannot pretend that this Greek text is more than a translation.

Flaccius and Majus alledge indeed, that as the Greek language was more universal than the Hebrew, and the Spirit of God foresaw the approaching apostacy of the Jews, he would inspire St Matthew to write in Greek, and not in Hebrew. But was the Spirit of God careless about the churches in Palestine? and is not sufficient care taken of us, by a Greek version, and St Mark's abridgement of St Matthew, which are extant to this day? We owe in general but little regard to writers who estimate the truth of history, not by the testimony of antiquity,

antiquity, but by their own arrogant judgment of what ought to be the truth.

Besides the united testimony of the fathers, it is unaccountable, if St Matthew wrote in Greek, why St Mark should abridge him? The size of St Matthew's gospel could not be his motive. But if he wrote in Hebrew, then a Greek abstract or abridgment of him might be of use.

I have dwelt longer than usual upon this, because I depart from the moderns in it, and therefore thought myself obliged to shew the grounds of my opinion.

But if we have lost the original text of St Matthew, and have only a Greek translation now extant, we certainly cannot ascribe a divine inspiration to the words; it is even possible that in some passages the translator may have missed the true sense of the Apostle. However, we have this satisfaction, that the principal facts related by Matthew are mentioned by the other Evangelists; and that St Mark was moved by the Holy Ghost to give us a full and authentic abstract of the Hebrew gospel of St Matthew. Add to this, that the Greek translation is not very easy, but follows the original text so closely, that it is more Hebrew than Greek; insomuch that sometimes the Greek construction is wrong; for instance, cap. ii. 6. *γὰρ ἰουδα* iv. 15. Hence it is not difficult to conjecture in doubtful places, what was the original word used by St Matthew, if we are acquainted with the Chaldee and Syriac languages. Without this aid we cannot explain St Matthew with any certainty.

We have, in the last place, some extracts from the Hebrew gospel of St Matthew, and Jerom, the most learned of the fathers, has compared it with the Greek version; supposing what we have said in the next section to be true, that the Nazarenes had the Hebrew text of St Matthew.

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I am of opinion, that in some passages the Greek translator has actually mistaken the sense. Thus it appears probable from Mark vi. 9. that in Matth. x. 10. before the words Shoes and Staves, stood $\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha$, Except only; the disciples were to take nothing with them but shoes and staves. And it would have been strange if they had been sent out to travel on foot without shoes and staves. But the Greek translator read $\eta\lambda$ for $\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha$, and therefore rendered it "Neither shoes nor staves."

SECTION XC.

The Gospel of the Nazarenes and Ebionites was the original text of St Matthew, though very much corrupted.

Simon in his hist. crit. du Texte du Nov. Testam. treats at large of the gospel of the Nazarenes and Ebionites, and is again contradicted by Majus in his Examen. hist. crit. But the latter argues miserably, and in the superfluity of his zeal, proves against Simon, that the interpolations in this gospel were not written by St Matthew, which Simon clearly admits.

Of the sect of the Nazarenes we have a full account in Epiphanius, hæres. xxix. The first Christians were all, as he justly observes, called Nazarenes, Acts xxiv. 6. But this name was afterwards appropriated to those Jewish converts to christianity who observed the law of Moses, and continued to obtain from all church communion with Gentiles. If we consider, that in the time of the apostles almost the whole church at Jerusalem consisted of such zealots for the law who were connived at whilst they did not compel the Gentiles to become Jews, Acts xxi. 20—26. we shall judge the error of the Nazarenes to have been tolerable. These Nazarenes, who were perfectly versed in the Hebrew tongue, had
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a Hebrew gospel of St Matthew, and the fathers represent it to us as the true original text of St Matthew, though Majus with a strange confidence denies this of the fathers. The words of Epiphanius, towards the close of the Hæres. xxix. are plainly these; "they have also the gospel of St Matthew compleat in the Hebrew tongue. For this gospel is certainly preserved among them, as it was originally written in Hebrew. I am only doubtful whether they have not expunged the genealogy of Christ as far as Abraham." So likewise Mosheim in his *Vindiciæ ant. Christ. discipl.* p. 114. observes, that the gospel of the Nazarenes was not unlike the Greek gospel of St Matthew, except the interpolation of some passages. Epiphanius's word *ἁπλοῦς*, or very compleat, seems not to have been fully understood either by Simon or Majus. He probably means, not that it was uncorrupted, but that it contains more history than the Greek Gospel. This additional history and the interpolations were probably not St Matthew's own, else we should find them in the Greek translation, or St Mark would have made extracts from them. They seem rather to have crept into the text from the margin, and to be of the same kind with that interpolation mentioned above, Sect. 15, of which we have lately a Latin dissertation by Peter Miller. (See the interpolations in Jerom's works).

Dr Mill in his *Prolegomena*, Sect. 45—49, endeavours to shew, that his gospel of the Nazarenes was quite a distinct piece from St Matthew's gospel, and that it was written jointly by some of the first christians at Jerusalem. He affirms, that none but Epiphanius and Jerom have confounded them together, though Jerom writes, a plerisque *Matthæi authenticum vocatur*. Dr Mill appeals to Origen, who, he says, distinguishes the two gospels from each other. This father frequently made use of the gospel of the Nazarenes (See Jerom's *Catal.*

Catal. in voce Jacobus) and yet he writes, that he had it from the report of the ancients, (*ἡ παράδοσις μαρτυρεῖ*) that Matthew wrote in Hebrew. In answer to this Dr Mill says, that if Origen had the Hebrew gospel in his own hands, he need not learn this from tradition. But was not Origen obliged to learn from tradition that this was the genuine gospel of St Matthew? He appeals moreover to Eusebius, who often makes honourable mention of the Hebrew Gospel. Eusebius in his account of the *ῥητὰ*, or spurious books, says, “among these some reckon the “Hebrew gospel;” hence Dr. Mill concludes, that Eusebius esteemed it even below the spurious books, which is a strange perversion of his words; for it is much more natural to conclude, that he and the majority reckoned this gospel among the authentic books, since he mentions only some who esteemed it spurious. But the words immediately preceding might have assisted Mill in explaining Eusebius; “among these spurious pieces we “are at liberty to place the Revelation of John” (which he had before, agreeably to the opinion of others, reckoned among the *ὁμολογούμενα*, “which some reject, but “others place among the *ὁμολογούμενα*. Among these some also place the Hebrew gospel.” But Dr Mill seems for once to have been less solicitous for truth than for arguments, whereby to defend the current opinion of divines.

Jerom translated this gospel into Greek, with all its interpolations, having obtained it from the Nazarenes at Berea in Syria. (See his book de scriptor. eccles. in Matthæum). He frequently quotes it, and tells us, it was in the library at Cæsarea. However he pretends not that it was uncorrupted. In lib. 2. comm. in Matth. c. 12. he writes thus; “in Evangelio quo utuntur Nazareni et Ebionitæ, quod nuper in græcum sermonem “transfultimus, quod vocatur a plerisque, Matthæi authenticum.” In another passage he calls it the real
gospel

gospel of St Matthew ; “ *Matthæus, qui evangelium Hebræo sermone conscripsit, ita posuit, &c.*” Perhaps the corruptions, which occurred in it, might be the reason of Jerom’s making no use, or at least a very cautious use of this gospel, in determining various readings, which contrary to Jerom’s declarations, Dr Mill interpretes as an argument, that he did not esteem that gospel to be the work of an apostle.

We have an instance in the fourth petition of the Lord’s prayer, of the use which might be made of this gospel with respect to those passages which have not been interpolated, if it were now extant. The Greek word is *επιουσιος*, successive, which our translations render, daily bread. But Jerom in his comm. in Matt. observes, that the word in the Hebrew gospel is *וּלְמָחָר* the bread of to-morrow, and hence we may justly render this petition, “ give us this day the bread of to-morrow.” Christ, who afterward prohibits all anxious care for the morrow, here permits us to cast this care upon our heavenly Father, and to beseech him, that he would give us this day what we shall need to-morrow, that we may wait for the morrow without anxiety. This is a much more rational sense of the fourth petition, than to beseech God, that he would give us this day that which we need for the use of this day, and of which most of us are already possessed.

The Ebionites had many things in common with the Nazarenes, but they had their peculiar, and those monstrous, errors. They likewise made use of the Hebrew gospel of St Matthew, but they had it more corrupted. Epiphanius says it was defective, corrupt, and imperfect. See Simon’s account of it, chap. viii. I shall only observe that the two first chapters of St Matthew are omitted, and that more or less of the beginning is wanting in most of the Hebrew gospels.

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The Hebrew gospel of St Matthew must not be confounded with his gospel in the Syriac New Testament, for this has no editions, nor the word *ܡܬܬܝ* in the Lord's prayer, and is a mere translation. The Hebrew gospel published by Munster and Tiller, is not the old gospel, but a later version. See Simon's *hist. crit. des Verf.* p. 231.

SECTION XCI.

Account of St Mark.

We have hitherto no satisfactory account of St Mark, the author of the second gospel. The ancients in general agree, that he was a familiar companion of St Peter, who in 1 Pet. v. 13. mentions a Mark, and calls him his son, that is, his worthy disciple. Possibly this may be the same Mark, who is elsewhere mentioned in the New Testament, and might very well be a companion of Peter, since Peter was so well acquainted in the family of his mother, Acts xii. 12. 14. and St Paul had taken him as a companion in his travels. These circumstances thus concurring, it is highly probable, that Mark the Evangelist, the son of Peter, and the fellow-traveler of Paul, were one and the same person.

His name was John Mark, Acts xii. 12. Mark was only a surname, which probably he had assumed in compliance with the then custom of the Jews, whilst he travelled among the heathens, to whom the Jewish names appeared too foreign. His mother's name was Mary. She dwelt at Jerusalem, and the Christians assembled at her house; Acts xii. 12. He was cousin to Barnabas, Col. iv. 10. and had accompanied him and Paul in their first travels among the Gentiles. But he soon separated from them, Acts xiii. 13. which occasioned a division between Paul and Barnabas, when the
latter

latter took him along with him in another journey, xv. 36—40. However Paul had a better opinion of him afterwards, when Mark lived at Rome about the time of St. Paul's imprisonment, for he reckons him among his fellow labourers, Philem. 24. and it appears from Coloss. iv. 10. that he had thoughts of sending him to Colossus.

SECTION XCII.

The Inspiration of his gospel.

ST MARK then, considered in a human light, was a very credible witness of the life of Christ. But the question is, whether his book be of divine authority, since he was not one of the apostles, and so is destitute of the argument upon which he founded the authority of most of the books of the New Testament?

He was strictly speaking an Evangelist, i. e. a preacher sent by the apostles to Jews and Gentiles, without being confined to any particular church. What Timothy was to Paul, Mark was to Peter and Barnabas, and at last he bore the same relation to Paul. It was usual for such Evangelists to have extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, which is evident at least from 1 Timothy, iv. 14. and 2 Timothy, i. 6. Hence it is so far from being incredible, that it is highly probable, that St Mark wrote by inspiration of the Holy Ghost; and as the primitive church has transmitted to us his gospel, as a book of divine authority, without ever entertaining the least doubt of his inspiration, (Euseb. hist. eccl. l. iii. c. 25.) we have no grounds to consider it as a mere human composition.

But there is a more important witness of the inspiration of St Mark, than the primitive church. Clemens Alexandrinus mentions in the sixth book of the Hypo-

typos that " St Mark wrote his gospel at the request
 " of some christians at Rome; and that when Peter
 " heard this, he expressed his satisfaction at the desire
 " of knowledge among the Roman christians, and order-
 " ed the gospel of St Mark to be thence forward read
 " in churches." See Euseb. hist. eccles. l. ii. c. 15.
 Eusebius indeed quotes the words of Clemens with some
 alterations, l. vi. c. 14. but Clemens is not our only
 nor our principal witness to this fact; for Eusebius
 found it likewise in Papias, who lived in the beginning
 of the second century, and made it his chief business to
 record whatever he could learn from the friends and ac-
 quaintances of the apostles. Euseb. l. ii. c. 15. l. iii. c. 39.

SECTION XXIII.

*St Mark took his gospel partly from St Matthew's, and
 partly from his conversation with St Peter.*

SOME of the ancients seem to be of opinion, that St
 Peter dictated this gospel to Mark. See Irenæus adv.
 hæres. l. iii. c. 1. Origen T. 1. comm. in Matth.
 But it appears from the testimony of Papias and Clemens
 of Alexandria, that he wrote his gospel without the
 knowledge of Peter.

Whoever compares Matthew and Mark together will
 easily discern, that the latter had St Matthew before him,
 and wrote with the design of publishing, in a more
 known language, that which St Matthew had written
 in Hebrew.

He cannot be considered as a free writer, since among
 so many remarkable transactions in the life of Christ, he
 always selects those recorded by Matthew, and omits
 many more important ones, which we find in Luke and
 John. Add to this the almost perpetual agreement be-
 tween the words, which could hardly be accidental, and
 which

which is much too close and uniform for the opinion of those who account for it from hence, that St Mark and the translator of Matthew were both Jews, and that the Jews commonly wrote very much alike, in point of style.

St Mark however was neither a translator, nor a mere abridger of St Matthew, in the strict sense of the word. He contradicts indeed the narration of Matthew, but he sometimes adds things which Matthew omits, and those were perhaps the accounts he had from St Peter. Hence Irenæus writes, l. iii. c. 1. "*Marcus discipulus et interpres Petri, et ipse quæ a Petro adnuntiata erant, per spiritum nobis tradidit.*"

He wrote his gospel at Rome, and for the use of those Romans who understood not the Hebrew. He therefore omits that part of St Matthew's history, which might be of more use to the Jews than Gentiles. Of this kind were the genealogy of Christ, and the massacre of the children at Bethlehem, of which a Gentile could not investigate the truth; the account of Jesus's birth at Bethlehem, and of his being there sought and found by some of the Jewish Philosophers from Arabia, which was less the concern of a Gentile, who could not read the Prophet Micah, than of a Jew; the sermon on the mount, which exposes the false morality of the Pharisees, to which the Gentiles were strangers; and in general, the frequent quotations of certain prophecies of the Old Testament, fulfilled in the person of Christ. Whoever peruses St Mark with due care, may for the most part conjecture the reason why this or that fact is omitted. On the other hand, he adds some things for the sake of the Gentiles, to enable them the better to understand the history of Christ. As a Roman might not know, how wild and uninhabited the deserts of Arabia are, in which Christ was tempted, he adds, chap. i. 13. "And was with wild beasts." In chap. vii. 2.

he explains to the Gentiles, what was the meaning of defiled or common among the Jews ; and in ver. 3. 4. instructs them in the Jewish customs, in a manner, which was unnecessary for St Matthew. In chap. xv. 21, he gives an account of Simon, that he was the father of Alexander and Rufus, because both these persons resided at Rome, and were known to the Roman Christians ; Rom. xvi. 13. All internal marks of this sort confirm the report of the ancients, that Mark wrote his gospel chiefly for the use of the Romans. The date of it is uncertain ; but it is probable from what hath been said before, that it was written in the time of St Paul's imprisonment at Rome, Mark being then resident at Rome. See in Simon's hist. crit. du Texte, &c. various uncertain accounts which we have in the subscriptions of this gospel.

SECTION XCIV.

St Mark wrote in Greek.

THE Greek language was at that time more in vogue at Rome, than the French is among us ; in so much that Augustus's most familiar letters, still extant, are commonly either in Greek, or intermixed with Greek. It is therefore not to be wondered that St Mark wrote his gospel in Greek.

Laronius indeed, and some others who follow him, pretend, that St Mark wrote in Latin ; and some moderns prove this chiefly from a manuscript at Venice, which is in Latin, and said to be of S. Mark's hand writing. . But both the fact and the argument by which it is supported, are false ; for though the Venetian gospel of St Mark is for the most part illegible, Misson discovered in it the letters Δ and Σ, which are peculiarly Greek ; and the Greek preposition ΚΑΤΑ. I

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therefore acquiesce in the almost unanimous testimony of the ancients, that St Mark wrote in Greek ; and I cannot conceive the possibility that ever there was a Latin original of this gospel, which has since been totally lost, considering that there were so many Latin churches, and that the Latin tongue prevailed throughout the Roman empire. But having little new to offer upon this subject, I refer my readers to Simon's hist. crit. du Texte du Nov. Testam. *Maji Examen*. hist. crit. Schrodter's *diff. de lingua Marci authentica*, and particularly to a learned letter, annexed by Baumgarten to his *Findiciæ textus Gr. Nov. Testam. contra Harduinum*, in which he confutes M. Ludewig.

SECTION XCV.

Account of the life and inspiration of St Luke.

ST LUKE being a heathen by birth, Coloss. iv. 11, 14. was neither one of the seventy disciples, nor an eye-witness of the works of Christ, which last he signifies himself, when he says, *παρακλητου Σηκος αναθεν πασιν αριβας*. He was a physician by profession, as appears from Coloss. iv. 14. and has been further shewn by Clauswitz de Luca Evangelista medico. A modern writer objects to the common opinion, that St Paul probably meant some other Luke, not the Evangelist, he being too well known to be described by the addition of his profession. But how does it appear that he was so well known to the Colossians, among whom St Paul himself, whose companion Luke was, had not then appeared ; and this writer must, upon his own principles, admit, that our Luke was at that very time with St Paul, since he salutes Philemon, ver. 24. in the name of Luke, without any farther addition ; and what grounds are there to imagine that the
salutation

salutation in the epistle to the Colossians was from another hand.

We know from the Acts of the Apostles, that St Luke was the usual companion of St Paul in his travels; and as a divine book, I refer to what has been said above in sect. 81. 82.

That he travelled with St Paul to Rome, and there assisted him for some time, appears from Acts xxviii. 13. 14. 15. 16. Col. iv. 14. and Philem. 24. From thence he is said to have gone into Africa, and to have preached the gospel at Thebes in Egypt; (See Oecumenius in his Comm. in Lucam) which circumstance will be of use to us hereafter.

His intercourse with the Apostles, and eye-witnesses of the works of Christ, renders him an unexceptionable witness, as a man; especially since he assures us that he investigated every thing diligently, *κριβως*, and had drawn it from the fountain head, which he intimates by the word *αυθεν*. Some have doubted concerning the divinity of his book, from his appeal to the testimony of others, and from his confession of the four first verses, that his history was delivered to him by the eye-witnesses. But as it is no objection to the inspiration of Moses that he took his first book from ancient records, or that he sometimes refers to other books, Numb. xxi. 27. so the divine inspiration of St Luke is not affected by his having heard what he wrote. The foolishness of God is here again wiser than the wisdom of some men, who would willingly censure the sacred books, but know not how. What would these cavillers say, if a Prophet should relate facts which he had never seen, and pretend that he had them from no witness, but was inspired by God? But as St Luke wrote by divine command, and was moved by the Holy Ghost, who guarded his pen from errors, to commit to writing that which he had received
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from credible witnesses, his history has a claim to the credit even of those who do not yet esteem him a Prophet, and are not yet convinced of the truth.

SECTION XCVI.

The time when St Luke wrote.

ALL the accounts of the ancients agree, that Luke wrote later than Matthew and Mark, though they assign a different year. Most of their opinions fall to the ground, if Matthew wrote his gospel in the year sixty-one. This being admitted, St Luke wrote his and the Acts of the Apostles about the year sixty-three or sixty-four. According to Occumenius he went about that time into Egypt, and not only the Syriac subscription concurs with this, for it mentions, that this gospel was published at Alexandria in Egypt; but we shall find in the next section that the supposition of its being written in Egypt will throw a light upon many things in that gospel.

Jerom indeed pretends in his comm. in Matth. that St Luke wrote it upon the borders of Achaia and Boeotia; but Grabe observes, that Jerom probably heard it was written at Thebes, and mistook Thebes in Boeotia for Thebes in Egypt. At least I am at a loss to account how that most excellent Theophilus, for whose use this book was written, came to be so utterly unknown among the ancients, if he dwelt in Greece. A Christian, who bore the same title of *πατρις* with a Roman general, could not lie concealed in the heart of Greece.

SECTION XCVII.

St Luke's Gospel was occasioned by the Egyptian Gospel.

GRABE in his *Spicilegium patrum primi seculi*, p. 33. gives the best account of the more immediate occasion of writing this gospel. St Luke mentions that he was determined to draw up an authentic account of the life of Christ, because "Many had taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed." He must have had some exception to these many, else he would hardly have been prevailed with to write upon the same subject which they had set forth already.

St Luke therefore wrote his gospel with a view to the errors committed by others, in writing the life of Christ. Many such lives might at that time have been published, and if we read the most ancient gospels in Fabricius's *Codex apocryph.* they will often throw light upon St Luke, and shew what mistaken accounts those were which he meant to obliterate or to correct. It is observed by Grabe and Milne, that St Luke, who wrote in Egypt, had his eye particularly upon the Egyptian gospel, of which we have a fragment in Fabricius's *Cod. apocr.* The sect. of the Essenes, of whom we shall give an account in the sequel, flourished at that time in Egypt, and the contents of the fragment of this gospel plainly shew, that it was written by Essenes; for we find in it their mystic singularities, and their doctrines, which prohibit marriage.

I shall render this observation of Grabe's both more probable and more useful, by applying it in illustration of two passages in St Luke.

St Luke is the only Evangelist who mentions our Saviour's particular command to his disciples, to sell their
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lands in Palestine, which would have been taken from them in a time of persecution, and give the money to the poor; a command which did not extend to all churches, but was very necessary for the Jewish converts in Palestine, since those lands might have proved a snare to them, and have tempted them back again to Judaism. The same St Luke gives us also an account at large, of the particular constitution of the church at Jerusalem, which was not to be imitated by other churches; Acts iv. 32. v. 11. and vi. The members of this church sold their possessions, and erected a community of goods. This had no relation to the principal object of the acts of the Apostles. But as the Essenes disclaimed property, and had all things in common, he seems to have related to them this constitution of the church at Jerusalem, so similar to theirs, in order to win them.

St Luke is the only Evangelist who relates the conversation between Gabriel and Mary, probably with a view of correcting a false account in the Egyptian, or some other gospel, of which I think we have the remains in the Koran; for it is well known, that Mahomed took most of his accounts concerning Christ from the false gospels, which abounded in Arabia in his time. Now in the third chapter we meet with a large, but erroneous account of most of the circumstances of the birth of John and Christ, which are more truly recorded by St Luke. I am therefore of opinion, that Mohammed, or the spirit which assisted him, borrowed them from no other gospel than that which St Luke took the pains to correct; especially as some things, contrary to the manner of Mohammed, tend to the praise of perpetual virginity, which was the doctrine of the Essenes; and as Christ is in this narrative called the Word of God, a name which was given him by the adherents of the Egyptian oriental philosophy. After Mohammed had related the immaculate

culate birth of Mary, her education in the temple, the annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist, and the dumbness of Zacharia, he reports, Sur. iii. ver. 40—43. that “The angel said to Mary, God hath promised thee his word, whose name is Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary.” St Luke likewise mentions more at large the names which the angel gave to the promised child, ver. 31. 32. “Who shall be famous in this life and in the next,” St Luke, οὗτος ἔσται μέγας, and among “Those who dare approach to God. He will speak to the people in his cradle, as a man in years, and will be one of the saints.—She answered to this, My Lord, how shall I have a son, since no man will touch me?” (It is manifest here, that he from whom Mohammed borrowed this account, perverted the real words of Mary, “Seeing I know not a man,” ver. 34. in order to persuade the world that she had before made vows of virginity; Mohammed himself could not invent this account, he being himself a warm friend to matrimony); “The angel answered, God doth what he will, and when he saith, Be it so, it is so, &c.” We meet in the Koran with more fragments, which might serve as improvements to Fabricii Codex Apocryphus. Mohammed makes but little alteration in them, and converts them into his own stile.

The words of Luke xvii. 20, 21, which are not reported by any other Evangelist, seem to be an emendation of the false account in the Egyptian gospel, which in Fabricius runs thus; “The Lord was asked when his kingdom would come? and he said, when ye shall tread under foot the covering of shame,” (i. e. when ye shall no longer cover your nakedness), “when two shall become one,” (i. e. probably, when the distinction of sexes shall cease, and all men shall become hermaphrodites) “and when that which is without shall be as that

“ which

“ which is within, and the man with the woman shall
 “ be neither man nor woman.” The question was put
 to Jesus, but the answer is falsely reported; and St
 Luke gives us the true one.

It appears from the beginning of his gospel, as well
 as of the Acts of the Apostles, that St Luke wrote more
 immediately at the request of a Christian of distinction,
 whose name was Theophilus. He calls him *xpatiste*,
 which is in Acts xxiii. 26. xxiv. 3. xxvi. 5. the title of
 the Roman governor, and equivalent to the Latin Opti-
 mus or Optimas, which the Romans made use of to de-
 scribe the principal senators of the most ancient families.
 From this title I justly conclude, that Theophilus was an
 individual and illustrious person, and not a name ad-
 dressed to every reader. But we have no account in
 history who this person was. Perhaps he dwelt in the
 Upper Egypt, or in Thebais, of the history of which
 country we know but little in general.

See an account, in Simon's Hist. crit. du Texte du
 Nov. Testam. of the corruption of this gospel by the
 Marcionites.

SECTION XCVIII.

Of St John.

WE have a very circumstantial account both of the
 life and gospel of St John, in Lampe's Prolegomena to
 his Comment. analyt. exeget. evangelii sec Johannem.
 The pains he has taken will shorten mine, and I should
 study brevity on this head with more pleasure, if many
 were not deterred from perusing this learned work by
 the unentertaining diffusiveness of it. However he seems
 to have mistaken the main object of St John's gospel,
 and to supply this defect, the reader may consult along
 with this book, *Oporini clavis evangelii Johannis.*

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We shall here mention only so much of the life of St John, as may influence the human credibility of his gospel. He was according to the testimony of the ancients, related to Christ, (See Lampe prolegom. lib. i. chap. i. sect. 4.) Before he came acquainted with our Saviour, he was a disciple of John the Baptist, and probably one of the two whom the Baptist sent to Christ, John i. 37——42. Christ honoured him with the most intimate confidence, and loved him beyond his other disciples. He and Peter and James were, exclusively of the other disciples, eye-witnesses of the resurrection of Jairus's daughter, of the transfiguration of Christ, and of the anguish of his soul in the garden, and he was the only Apostle who stood under the cross. So that he was better qualified than any other to give a satisfactory account of the miracles and history of Christ. It seems to me highly probable, that St John in the life-time of Christ, wrote down some of the heads of his discourses. At least the stile is perfectly like that of those who relate the discourses of another, after having taken down the heads whilst they were spoken.

SECTION XCIX.

John wrote his Gospel to refute the errors of Cerinthus.

THE most material question here to be determined is concerning the particular design with which St John wrote his gospel. The most ancient writers, Irenæus, Jerom and others, tell us, that he meant not merely to write a life of Christ, but to confute the errors of Cerinthus and the Gnostics. The words of Irenæus, in his third book contra hæres. cap. 2. are; “ John endeavour-
 “ ed by his gospel to extirpate the error which had been
 “ propagated by Cerinthus, and long before his time by
 “ the Nicolaites, a sect of those who are falsely called
 Gnostics.

" Gnostics. He endeavoured to put them to shame, and
 " to shew, that there is one God who by his word
 " made all things ; and that the Creator and the Father
 " of our Lord were not, as they pretended, distinct
 " beings, &c." Lampe in his *Prolegomena* contradicts
 this account, but Oporinus, to whose useful work I re-
 fer my readers, explodes his weak arguments. See also
Buddei Ecclesia Apostolica, p. 411.

It is manifest at first sight, that St John's object was
 not to write a history of Christ, of whose parents and
 birth he gives not the least account, and of whom he re-
 lates hardly any of the facts recorded in the other Evan-
 gelists, not even those of which he and Peter and James
 were eye-witnesses, exclusive of the other disciples ; but
 that he meant only to collect those discourses and miracles
 of Jesus, which might serve to confirm the doctrines
 laid down, chap. i. 1—18. which were counter-posi-
 tions to Cerinthus. It is therefore a weak answer of
 Lampe's to Irenæus, that St John names no heretics
 whom he was combating ; for he plainly lays down in
 the very beginning of his gospel the doctrines which
 they disputed, and which his gospel proves.

We may therefore consider his book as a Polemic piece.
 Cerinthus maintained the grossest errors concerning
 Christ ; and how could these be better confuted than by
 setting forth at large the discourses of Christ, which dis-
 proved such errors, and the miracles which confirmed
 those discourses ?

SECTION C.

Of the Gæcis, or Oriental Philosophy.

It is an uncontroverted point, that not only Cerin-
 thus, but the most learned heretics of the first century,
 who are sometimes called in general Gnostics, from *gnosis*,

Knowledge or learning, drew their errors from the Egyptian or Oriental philosophy. Whoever is unacquainted with this will have but an imperfect insight into the particular errors of Cerinthus and other his fellow heretics, mentioned by the fathers. But being acquainted with the consequences, which the Egyptians drew from their principles, we shall be able to judge what may have been taught by certain heresiarchs of the primitive Church, besides their principal tenets, which are recorded. I shall treat of this Egyptian philosophy when I come to consider the Essenes, who likewise borrowed their tenets from it. At present I would only shew briefly, the doctrine it delivers concerning God, which will at the same time throw a light upon the tenets of Cerinthus, and upon the doctrines of the Essenes, and consequently upon all those epistles of St Paul which are levelled at them.

The Egyptian Philosophers did not fall in with all the superstition of the people, but worshipped one supreme and first God, whom they called in Greek *ΕΙΣ*, the one. Iamblichus in his book *de Mysteris Ægyptiorum*, Sect. viii. cap. 2. writes thus concerning the Deity; "Before all things that exist, and before the first original beings," (meaning the spirits who created the world) "there is one God" (*ΕΙΣ*, *ΕΙΣ*, which denomination *ΕΙΣ* is perpetually repeated in the sequel). "He is prior to the first God," (meaning his Son) "and to the King he is moveable; and continues in the solitude of his unity." This only God was worshipped far and near in the Eastern countries, and they intermixed superstition in their worship of him. They called him Adad, or rather Ahad, i. e. One, as appears from Macrobius. Saturn. lib. i. cap. 23. and Euseb. prepar. evangel. cap. x. 38. and he seems to have been the *אֵל* mentioned Isa.

lxvi. 17 *. The disciples of Pythagoras and Plato received these tenets from the Egyptians. See Gale's notes upon the Iamblichus, p. 297 - 300. Their belief concerning this God, was, that he was quite incomprehensible, and therefore they called him the eternal darkness, or a darkness beyond all conception. In opposition to which St Paul says, 1 Tim. vi. 16. that he dwelleth in the light, which no man can approach unto.

Here is much true and sound doctrine, and their belief concerning the Son is yet more remarkable. It agrees so exactly with the doctrine of the apostles, that I consider it among the Egyptians, as a fragment of the ancient true religion of the Patriarchs; and it seems to me to contribute greatly towards a right explanation of those passages of Moses, in which an angel is mentioned, who is God himself; if we consider that Moses was educated in the wisdom of a nation, which ascribed to God one eternal and infinite Son. See also Prov. xxx. 2, 3, 4. Iamblichus writes of him in the place before quoted, "From this one, that God who is his own original, (*αυταρχης*) kindled himself, (*εαυτον εξελαμψι*) "wherefore he is also called his own Father and his "own Origin." (A Christian cannot assert the eternal divinity of the Son of God in stronger terms). "For "he is the original being, and the God of gods †,

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* Isaiah there denounces a curse against those who worship the Ahad אֶחָד, in the midst. This which hath hitherto not been explained by any commentator, strikes at the exceptionable part in their worship of Ahad, or one God. The Egyptians maintained that the only true God never approached his worshippers, without being attended by many inferior spirits, who were to be worshipped by sacrifice and prayer; which was worshipping Ahad in the midst, or in the train of other gods and spirits. See Iamblichus, Sect. v. cap. 21.

† It was usual among the Egyptians, as among the Hebrews, sometimes to call angels gods, and the Son of God they sometimes

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“ One of one, before any thing existed,” (for so I translate *πρῶτος*, which Gale falsely renders *superessentialis*), “ and before the beginning of existence. For “ from him comes the possibility of being, and being “ itself, whence he is also called the beginning of things “ imaginable, (*νοητὰς*).” I must here refer the reader to Gale’s notes, and particularly to that passage of Porphyry which Cyril has preserved in his book against Julian. Of this God they believed, that he was the image of that God, who could only be known in him. In reading Heb. i. 3. and Col. i. 15, 16. we shall observe that St Paul attributes to Christ what the oriental philosophy taught concerning the son of God.

Thus far the oriental philosophy agrees with Christianity; and we have the less cause to wonder, that the two doctrines were intermixed together. Had the Egyptians stopped here, we should have had no reason to censure them; but they invented other gods of different names, as begotten by these; of which see Iamblichus and Gale’s notes. I shall only observe here, that they had a Demiurgus, and considered this inferior God as the Creator of the world; Euseb. præp. evang. lib. iii. cap. 11. that they believed a certain internal intelligence, (*αὐτὸς λόγος*) to whom man must go, (Iamblichus, Sect. v. cap. 6); and in the last place, that they moreover believed some spirits, who communicated to man the gift of prophecy, which spirits they called *εἰσα* or lights; Sect. iii. cap. 8. They were not agreed who was meant by the *λογος* or the Word. Some thought it a great Æon or created spirit. But among the Bramans in India, and probably

stiled the God, sometimes the King of gods; which gives a light to Jos. xxii. 2 Ps. l. 7. xcv. 3. xcvi. 7. The very name *יהוה* God of Hosts. is the same as God of Angels, or as a Heathen would have expressed it, God of gods, i. e. the most high God, whose subjects are the gods whom superstition adores. See with how much propriety St Paul, Heb. i. applies the 97th Psalm to Christ.

probably among some sects in Egypt, the Son of God, who was simply called God, was also esteemed to be the $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ or $\phi\omega\varsigma$, and by this means the genealogy of the $\text{\AA}$ ones was shortened. See Origen's *philosophumena*, and Fabricius de Brachamanibus. This was the source of many Gnostic errors in the Christian Church; for when some of the orthodox called Christ $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ in the latter sense, others admitted indeed the name, but distinguished the word and the light from the only begotten. I shall not proceed farther to enumerate the intire genealogy of their inferior gods and spirits.

SECTION CL.

The influence of this philosophy upon Christianity, and the doctrines of Cerinthus.

THAT this kind of philosophy first took its rise in Egypt, I conclude from hence, that the other tenets connected with it, such as matter being the origin of evil, bodily austerities, and a Purgatory after this life, were manifestly imported by Pythagoras, in the earliest time, from Egypt into Greece, and the Egyptians seem to have been the first people who applied themselves to learning. I therefore call it the Egyptian philosophy, but without pretending that all the Egyptians were unanimous in these doctrines. In the earliest times of the New Testament it was called in Greek $\gamma\nu\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$, and $\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\lambda\omicron\iota\kappa\eta\ \delta\iota\delta\alpha\kappa\alpha\lambda\iota\alpha$. For a further account of it I refer my reader to Mosheim's *institutiones majores hist. Christ. seculi primi*. It was applicable very different ways, and has made its appearance in the Christian Church under a twofold and very dissimilar form. Some derived from it an austere and extravagant system of morals, of which number were the Essenes. Others made use of certain of its tenets, such as that which placed the origin of evil in the
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body to the palliate vices ; and of this kind were those different sects, which the fathers usually comprehend under the general name of Gnostics.

We cannot with any certainty, rank Cerinthus under either of these classes, as we have no certain account of his Ethics. His Millenium, which was to be spent in voluptuousness, approaches near to the dissolute doctrines of the Gnostics ; but he differs from them in this, that he received the law of Moses. The clearest account of his doctrines is in Buddeu's *ecclesia apostolica*, and Mosheim's works just mentioned. He believed, that the most high God was intirely unknown before the time of Christ, and dwelt in a remote heaven, which he called *πληρωμα*, with the chief and best spirits, or *Æones*. This supreme God first generated an only begotten son, *μονογενης*, who again begat the word *λογος*, which was inferior to the first born Christ was yet inferior to *Æon*, but far superior to others.

From the *Æones* again proceeded yet lower orders of spirits ; and particularly one *Demiurgus*, who created this visible world out of an eternal matter. He knew not the supreme God, and was much lower than these *Æones* which were wholly invisible. The same *Demiurgus* was the particular god and protector of the Israelites, and sent Moses and the prophets. Notwithstanding this, Cerinthus maintained that this law was still obligatory upon us. He considered Jesus as a mere man, but it is doubtful whether he thought him the natural son of Joseph, or a son of the *Demiurgus*. To this Jesus, according to Cerinthus, Christ was united in baptism ; so that Jesus was not Christ but a person in intimate union with Christ. But when Jesus was to suffer, Christ left him and fled into the *Pleroma*, or upper-most heaven. Jesus propagated the knowledge of the most high God upon earth ; and he will return and erect a kingdom of a thousand years at Jerusalem, in which
his

his disciples shall enjoy in abundance all kinds of sensual pleasures.

This is a short extract of what Mosheim delivers most material and most certain, and confirms by the testimony of the ancients concerning Cerinthus. I make the following observations upon it ;

1. The doctrine, that Christ was united with Jesus after his baptism, seems to have taken its rise from the doctrine of eastern philosophers, concerning the transmigration of souls. For we know that some even applied this doctrine to the gods, and maintained that they removed from one body into another. This was often pretended by the Indian Bramans, and a sect which sprung from them, and was propagated in China in the first century, believed that their God transmigrated from one Lama into another. See du Halde's *discriptione de la Chine*, T. iii.

2. The Fathers indeed mention not, that Cerinthus invented two distinct *Æones*, of which one was called the Life, and the other the Light. But this appears highly probable from John i. 4, 5. I cannot see the connection of these words with the preceding ones, unless they are put in opposition to those, who maintained $\omega\eta$ and $\phi\omega\varsigma$ to be two distinct *Æones* from Christ. This is the more credible, as I have shewn before, from Iamblichus, that the Egyptians called by the name of light certain spirits, which make known to us the will of God. It is particularly probable from ver. 6—8. that Cerinthus might have pretended, that the *Æon*, light, entered into John in the same manner in which Christ entered into Jesus ; and that in some respects he might have preferred John to our Saviour. At least some of the followers of the oriental philosophy might be inclined to extol John the Baptist too high, because the extreme austerities of his life were partly agreeable to their principles.

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SECTION CII.

The first part of the gospel of St John from ver. 1. to 18. contains the doctrines to be proved against Cerinthus.

THE gospel of St John is divided into three parts. In the first eighteen verses are the positions to be maintained against Cerinthus. It is ridiculous to pretend, that John here relates the history of Christ before his birth. It is necessary to observe and distinguish the several positions, because the design of the whole gospel is to prove them. They are as follows ;

1 The *λογος* or the *μονογενης* are one and the same person, ver. 14. "and we beheld his glory, and the glory "as of the only begotten of the father."

2. This *λογος* was in the beginning, and was not begotten by the *μονογενης* ver. 1.

3. He was with God in the Pleroma, ver. 1. (See the proof of this position dispersed here and there in the gospel, iii. 13. 31, 32. vi. 62. vii. 28, 29. &c.

4. He is not to be distinguished from the Demiurgus, for he is the creator of the whole world, ver. 3. 10.

5. Life and light are not particular and separate spirits, but the same with the *λογος*.

6. The same is also Christ, ver. 17. So that Christ, the word, life, light, the only begotten, are not distinct *Æones*, but one and the same divine person.

7. No *Æon* entered into John the Baptist by the name of Light, who was to deliver to men the clearest knowledge of the will of the most high God, ver. 8.

8. John is a mere man, ver. 6. and

9. Much lower than Jesus, being only a fore-runner of him, ver. 8.

10. This true light was never totally removed from the world. It revealed the will of God to man even in the

the darkest times of the Old Testament, and it was, merely the fault of men, that they did not receive it, ver. 10.

11. The Jewish nation were not the peculiar people of an inferior God, such as the Demiurgus, but of this very exalted person, ver. 11.

12. This person became man, and did not barely communicate certain revelations to the man Jesus, ver. 10.

13. He abolished the shadow of the law of Moses, and instead of it introduced the truth, or the very thing signified, ver. 14. 17.

14. The Jew has not a more immediate right in this person, than the Heathen; and whoever believes in him will become a child of God, ver. 12, 13.

SECTION CIII.

*The second part contains the proof, from chap. i. 17.
to xx. 29.*

SOME expositors of scripture consider these several propositions as a sufficient confutation of Cerinthus. But though the Apostles had the gift of the Holy Ghost, and were infallible, yet all heretics did not submit to them, 3 John 9. and particularly those who studied the eastern philosophy, and assumed the name of Gnostics, made it their common pretence that the Apostles did not rightly understand our Saviour. It was therefore necessary for St John to produce a proof of his principles, and this he doth by quoting the words and discourses of John the Baptist, and of Christ himself, from which every one would be able to judge what was their genuine meaning.

We will consider every chapter in his gospel, in order to shew what he meant to evince in each transaction,

or

or discourse, referring to the doctrines as they are numerically distinguished in the last section.

1.) From chap. i. 19. to ii. 11. John the Baptist himself confessed to the deputies from the high-priests, and to his own disciples, that he was much inferior to Jesus. He referred them to Jesus; they acknowledged Jesus to be the Christ, and were confirmed in this faith by a miracle, Numb. 9.

2.) Chap. ii. 12—22. Jesus conducted himself at Jerusalem, as the Lord of the temple.

3.) Chap. ii. 23.—iii. 21. Jesus revealed himself to Nicodemus, as the only begotten son of the Father, and at the same time signified to him, that a Jew had no share in the kingdom of God from his natural descent from Abraham, but that he must first be born again a son of Abraham by baptism, and by the spirit of the Levitical law, i.e. by the gospel. He declares withal, that he is the light; and that it was the fault of men themselves that they did not receive him. Numb. i. 5. 10. and 14.

4.) Chap. iii. 22—36. John the Baptist acknowledged Jesus to be far his superior, Numb. ix.

5.) Chap. iv. 1—42. Jesus converted and received the Samaritans, and on that occasion declared, that he was the Christ, and that the Levitical worship was abolished, Numb. 6—14.

6.) Chap. iv. 43—54. Jesus by a second miracle demonstrated his divine mission in his own country, where it was most disputed.

7.) Chap. v. 1—47. Jesus violated the Sabbath, and thereupon declared himself to be the Son of God; and confirmed both by a miracle. Numb. 1. and 13. He appealed on this occasion to Moses, and assured his hearers, that he testified of him. Consequently Moses was not sent by a Demiurgus, who knew not the God whom Christ revealed to the world.

2.) Chap.

8.) Chap. vi. 1—71. Jesus substituted himself in the room of sacrifices and of the Paschal Lamb, and commanded the people, who went to Jerusalem to eat the Passover, to eat his flesh and drink his blood. When some were offended at this, he told them that the spirit, or the thing signified by the Levitical law, gave life to man, whereas the flesh of sacrifices and of the Passover was useless. But that the words, which he spoke, were the spirit or sense of the law, Numb. 13.

9.) Chap. vii. 1—53. He promised the Holy Spirit, and was acknowledged by many to be the Christ.

10.) Chap. viii. 1—11. He contributed to prevent the execution of the law of Moses against adultery, when he was put to the trial, whether he would declare against the law of Moses, Numb. 13.

11.) Chap. viii. 12—59. He declared himself to be the light of the world, and older than Abraham, Numb. 5. and 12.

12.) Chap. ix. 1—x. 39. After performing a great miracle, which was judicially examined, he affirms himself to be the light of the world, the great shepherd or King, i. e. the Messiah, and the son of God; and that the Heathens belonged to his flock, Numb. 1. 5. 6. 13.

13.) Chap. x. 40—xi. 53. He confirmed the doctrines he had hitherto taught by the greatest and most credible miracle near Jerusalem; which was different from other miracles in this, that it was wrought after an express invocation of God, and that he would apply it to the confirmation of the divine doctrine of Jesus.

14.) Chap. xi. 54. 12. 43. This miracle became so publicly known, that it raised the attention of all Jerusalem. Some openly proclaimed Jesus to be the Messiah, at his entry into Jerusalem. The High priests, who could not deny the miracle, consulted how they might

put Jesus to death. In the mean time God added another confirmation to his doctrine by a voice from heaven.

John mentions this miracle so particularly, because it served to corroborate all the former doctrines of Jesus. He therefore removes the doubt which might arise, concerning the truth of Christ's miracles, from the unbelief of the Jews, ver. 37—43.

15.) Chap. xii. 44.—50. A short abstract of the testimony of Jesus concerning his own doctrine, and his character, as the Light of the world, Numb. 5.

16.) Chap. xiii. 1. —35. Jesus institutes the law of hospitality among his disciples, and gives them a new commandment, which had not been delivered to the faithful under the Old Testament, to love one another as brethren, without distinction, and as members of the same church, * Numb. 14.

17.) Cap.

* The washing of feet was in the Eastern countries commonly the first kindness shewn to a traveller, who was to be hospitably received, whence it is sometimes put for hospitality in general; 1 *Timothy*, v. 10. when therefore Christ washed the feet of his disciples, and taught them to condescend in like manner to their inferiors, it amounts to as much, as if he had instituted the law of hospitality among all his future disciples. Now as strangers are the objects of this law, and not persons who live together in the same place, he by this commandment obliged all his future disciples to love each other, and abolished the distinction betwixt Jew and Heathen. This is the true meaning of this action of Christ, which many have interpreted so strangely. The primitive church was very careful in the duties of hospitality; whereas some heretics, with whom St John is highly displeased, forbade the reception of the brethren, probably of Gentile converts, 3 John 10.

We see how justly both Christ and John call the commandment of loving one another, a new commandment. It was new in the strictest sense. Men were always obliged in general to love their neighbour, and Moses had delivered the same commandment, as Christ tells us, *Luke* x 27—37. But as the Christian was the first church, which consisted of Jews and Gentiles, the commandment to these, of lo-
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17.) Chap. xiii. 36—xvi. 33. Contain the last discourses of Christ, the chief import of which was, that a perpetual and intimate union with Christ is indispensably necessary to our salvation; and that after his departure he would send the Holy Ghost to his Apostles, who should always influence them, and teach them some doctrines which they were not yet able to bear.

If it be asked why St John was so circumstantial in his account of this, when he was writing against Cerinthus, the answer is, that most of those heretics who were followers of the eastern philosophy, and thence took the name of Gnostics, denied the divine authority of the Apostolical decrees in general, and pretended, that the Apostles misunderstood the doctrine of Christ. Cerinthus in particular, who was for retaining the law of Moses and Judaism, might object to St John, that Christ observed the law, and at least taught nothing more with respect to the abrogation of it, than that the distinction betwixt clean and unclean meats should cease. For Mosheim shews very clearly, that Cerinthus was not for retaining the whole law of Moses, but a certain part of it, which Christ had not expressly abolished. St John could not better confute this Cerinthus, than by reciting the discourses of Christ, in which he promised the Apostles a continual inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and at the same time foretold, that they would be moved by the Holy Ghost to set forth some things which had not been so fully set forth by Christ, when on earth.

18.) Chap. xvii. 1—26. Jesus commended his disciples, and all the converts they should make, to his Father in a memorable prayer; and at the same time re-

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tified,

ving one another was entirely new, and inculcated as such so earnestly by St John in his first epistle against Cerinthus. The whole first epistle will receive a light from this observation.

nified, that none of his Apostles were lost, except Judas Iscariot.

Now as this prayer must be supposed to have been favourably heard, it was an argument, against Cerinthus, of the divine authority of the doctrine taught by the Apostles.

19.) Chap. xviii. 1—xix. 42. Contain the passion of Christ; in which St John seems studious to collect some circumstances omitted by others, which did not immediately relate to his main point, and to the confutation of Cerinthus. However chap. xviii. 33—38. contradicts Cerinthus's notion of a temporal kingdom of Christ.

20.) Chap. xx. 1—29. Contains the most credible account of the resurrection of Christ, whereby all his preceding discourses were confirmed; and of his repeated promise to the Apostles of sending them the Holy Ghost. He mentions at the same time Thomas's confession to Jesus after his resurrection, that he was his Lord and his God, without any objection made to it by Jesus; so that Cerinthus's pretence was erroneous, that Jesus was a mere man from the time of his passion.

Throughout this whole second part of his gospel he assumes the character of an historian, rather than that of a polemic. He could by this means state the discourses of Christ more in their order of connection, that every one might judge for himself, whether the Apostles had interpreted them rightly or not; and it answered the purpose of rendering his gospel more acceptable to those who had been perverted. He had moreover an opportunity by this means of doing essential service to the church, by relating many remarkable things omitted by the other Evangelists; which some ignorantly pretend to have been the sole object St John had in view.

Whoever considers the real end of St John in the narrative of every fact, will gain more light and insight into

into his gospel than voluminous comments can give him ; and it is for this reason that I have endeavoured briefly to point out the end of every such relation.

SECTION CIV.

The conclusion of the Gospel.

NEXT follows a conclusion or appendix to this gospel. St John begins it with a declaration of the view with which he had related the miracles of Christ, that his readers might believe, that "Jesus is the Christ the Son of God," chap. xx. 30. 31. Oporinus, in his *Clavis Evangelii Johannis*, shews these to be the very principles opposed to the doctrine of Cerinthus, or as St John himself expresses it in his first epistle, chap. ii. 22. of the Liar and Antichrist. At least he describes the errors of certain pretended Christians, whom he confutes, more than once in the same words.

The second part of the conclusion or appendix seems to have been added with the view of giving his readers some account of the person of the writer. Some of the first Christians thought John the Evangelist would live till the day of judgment ; which error was occasioned by certain words of Christ, and by the great age to which John arrived. See Fabricii *cod. apocryph.* p. 533. Not. x. This error might have weakened the authority of St John's testimony, had he died without contradicting it. He therefore relates at large what passed at the appearance of Christ, and how the words stood connected, when Christ said of him, "If I will, that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

It is hardly worth the while to confute the opinion of some moderns, who deny this chapter to have been written by John, and ascribe it to the elders of the church at Ephesus, because we read in ver. 24. "We know that

“his testimony is true;” and because John had already concluded gospel at the close of the former chapter. The stile of this chapter is perfectly St John’s stile: The expression, “We know,” is a known figure of speech, and amounts to this, Every Christian knows, &c. His speaking of himself in the third person is not extraordinary, since other historians, Moses, for instance, and Cæsar constantly did it; and though the former chapter concluded his confutation of Cerinthus, yet he was at liberty to add an account of himself, which was so satisfactory to the church and to his readers.

SECTION CV.

Of the time when this Gospel was written.

LAMPE in his Prolegom. treats at large of the time when St John wrote this Gospel. It is pity he thought the Revelation to have been written in the reign of Domitian, and that the Gospel was prior to it, of which he adduces a very weak proof, from Rev. i. 2. 9. as if John had borne a testimony to Jesus in his gospel only, and not in all his sermons. We shall shew clearly in the sequel, that admitting the Revelation to be the work of St John the Evangelist, yet it was written so early as in the time of Claudius, and therefore long before his gospel.

Thus much is certain, from the unanimous testimony of all the ancients, that St John’s was the last of the four gospels, and that he wrote it in Asia, and particularly at Ephesus. It was consequently written after the year of Christ sixty-three, for the Acts of the Apostles were written in that year. Yet it was probably not written after the destruction of Jerusalem, for St John speaks of that city as then subsisting, chap. v. 1. I will not venture to determine the time with more precision, because the
ancients

ancients vary much in assigning the year. I would only add, that in my opinion it appears from the gospel itself, that it was written after the death of Peter. The other Evangelists, in relating the adventure of cutting off an ear, conceal the name of Peter, lest the Jews should be furnished with a legal pretence for prosecuting him, and surrendering him to the Romans for capital punishment. But St John mentions his name, chap. xvii. 10. which would have been very indiscreet, had Peter been still living. Nor could St John have interpreted the words of Christ, "another shall gird thee," xxi. 18, 19. so confidently of Peter's death, had Peter been still living; for all the time of his death these words were very ambiguous.

Lampe, in his Prolegom. gives a full and learned account of the Heretics, who rejected the gospel of St John; but he seems to acquit some heretics, undeservingly, from the charge. However we are little concerned in the contradictory opinions of these heretics; for most of them admit, that St John wrote it, and only contend that it contains erroneous doctrine. But it is absurd to charge him with an error, whilst they admit that he was a worker of miracles, and that Jesus, who commissioned him as an apostle, and a messenger with full powers from him, was the Son of God or Christ, or a true prophet and worker of miracles, which they themselves believe of him. The Alogi, a sect who sprung up in the third century, distinguished by their aversion to the expression, *λογος*, were the only people who certainly denied this gospel to be St John's, and even ascribed it to Cerinthus. But the gospel itself manifestly contradicts this last pretence; and the arguments of the Alogi are not drawn from the testimony of the ancients, but from this, that this gospel contradicts the other Evangelists. In short, the Alogi thought none could use *λογος* as a person, but Cerinthus and his disciples; where-

as whoever confuted Cerinthus, must necessarily use the same word.

SECTION CVI.

The Acts of the Apostles, by whom and when written.

The last of the historical books of the New Testament is the Acts of the Apostles, which is, in many ancient manuscripts, and versions, taken into the second part, and placed at the end of St Paul's epistles, as being indispensable towards rightly understanding them. It appears from the very beginning of this book, that it is the second part of St Luke's gospel, and that both were written by the same hand; and this is attested by the most ancient Christian writers, whose testimonies on this subject are quoted by Benson, in the appendix to the second part of his history of the first planting of the Christian religion.

It is probable, that this second part was published along with the gospel, as being the first part of St Luke's history; and I see no reason for not giving credit to the subscriptions at the end of some Greek manuscripts, and of the copies of the Syriac version, which certify, that St Luke wrote the Acts as well as his gospel at Alexandria. His narrative reaches as far as the year of Christ sixty-three, the Acts cannot have been written earlier, and that they were not written later, may be gathered from hence, that he would have continued his subject farther, and at least have related the issue of St Paul's imprisonment at Rome, which the reader must be curious to know. Benson has diligently collected the testimonies of the ancients, which transmit and recommend this book to us as a divine book. But I shall make no extracts from him, because this book, though not the work of an apostle, is less disputed than others.

Considered

Considered as a mere human witness, St Luke was better qualified than others, to draw up an authentic history of the apostles, he having accompanied St Paul in many of his journeys. As he went as a Physician by profession, he was qualified to form a sound judgment of the miracles St Paul wrought upon the diseased, and to make a credible report of them. But he seems not to have had the gift of healing diseases himself; for in chap. xxviii. 8, 9. St Paul, and not he, healed the sick by prayer and imposition of hands. His accounts are generally so full and circumstantial, that the reader is perfectly enabled to examine the facts himself, and to judge whether they were attended with any deception, or not.

SECTION CVII.

The real design of St Luke in writing this book.

It is highly probable, that St Luke meant not merely to write an ecclesiastical history of the first thirty years after Christ's ascension, but that he had a particular end in the writing the Acts of the Apostles; which particular end must not be confounded with the use which may be drawn from the book, it being possible for subsequent times to apply a work to a purpose, of which the writer never thought.

That he had a particular end, appears from the choice of his matter. For he almost wholly omits what passed among the Jews, after the conversion of St Paul; and yet it will hardly be denied, that the labours of the other eleven or twelve apostles deserved a place in ecclesiastical history. Before St Luke wrote his acts of the apostles, the younger James had been stoned to death by the Jews, and the Christians in Judea had been so severely persecuted, that many of them began to waver in the Faith,

Faith, which induced St Paul to write his epistle to the Hebrews. These are circumstances which could not have been passed over in silence, had St Luke had no other design than to write a church-history.

If we attend to the contents of this book, we shall observe this twofold end in it :

1. " To give an authentic relation of the effusion of the Holy Ghost, and the first miracles, by which the truth of the Christian religion was established." An authentic account of this was indispensably necessary, since Christ had so often promised the Holy Ghost to his disciples. And if a Heathen were to receive the gospel, it was natural for him to ask, how it had at first been promulged and received at Jerusalem.

2. " To impart those accounts, which evince the claim of the Gentiles to the church of Christ;" which was particularly contested by the Jews about the time of St Luke's writing the acts, St Paul himself, whose fellow-traveller Luke usually was, was at that time a prisoner at Rome, upon an accusation of the Jews, who became his enemies for having admitted the Gentiles into the church.

Hence it is, that St Luke relates, chap. viii. the conversion of the Samaritans, and chap. xxi.—the history of Cornelius, whom even Peter (to whom the adversaries of Paul appealed, Gal. ii. 6—21.) had instructed in the gospel, by divine command, and baptised, though he was not of the circumcision. For the same reason he relates, chap. xv. what was decreed in the first council at Jerusalem, concerning the Levitical law; and most fully of the conversion of St Paul, and of his mission and transactions among the Gentiles. The whole narration of the twelfth chapter seems to have been inserted, merely because St Paul was then at Jerusalem, and a witness to every thing that passed. See chap. xi. 20. vii. 25.

S E C T.

SECTION CVIII.

Commentators on the Acts.

THE Acts of the Apostles is at first sight so easy a book that few have undertaken to give a separate comment upon it. Some have apprehended it would not afford them room to display their learning; and as many useful and important reflections will arise in a judicious mind upon reading the book, and many things in it still want an explanation, so a superficial writer will see but few things in it to excite his attention.

Lardner's credibility of the Gospel-history contains so many new and useful illustrations of this book, that it may serve instead of a comment, and it is indispensably necessary for those, who would understand the Acts of the Apostles. Benson's history of the first planting of the Christian Religion, serves particularly to explain the Acts. It not only admirably illustrates the history, but delivers a paraphrase of the sermons and speeches contained in it. For the better understanding the second chapter, which is of such importance, it may be proper to have recourse to the commentators upon the prophet Joel, and particularly to Chandler's Paraphrase on Joel.

SECTION CIX.

The number and order of the Epistles of St Paul.

THE Epistles of St Paul are not placed in the order of time in which the apostle wrote them; but in the supposed order of the churches or persons to whom they are directed. Hence we find those the first epistles which are addressed to whole churches, and Rome be-
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ing at that time the capital of the world, the Epistle to the Romans is the first. Next comes Corinth, the capital of Greece. The Galatians being a whole nation, are preferred to the other individual cities. The Epistle to the Philippians is according to this rule not placed in its proper rank; for it stands before those to the Colossians and Theſſalonians, by a mistaken conclusion drawn from Acts xvi. 12. that Philippi was the capital of Macedonia. After these follow the Epistles of single persons, among whom Timothy, the constant assistant of St Paul, is justly placed first, and Philemon last, he having either not filled any office in the church of Christ, or having been only appointed in a single church to the care of externals. It would be inconvenient to us to follow this order; we shall rather consider them, as they follow each other in order of time. For a further account of them altogether, see Mill's Prolegomena, Section 4, &c. Langii commentatio de vita et epistolis Pauli; Buddei ecclesia apostolica, and Benson's hist. of the first planting the Christian church.

As St Paul did not write his epistles with his own hand, but usually subscribed them, he adds in some of them to his own name, the name of him to whom he had dictated the Epistle of Timothy, for instance, and Silvanus. This is the rational conjecture of Heumann, in his *Epistola de scribis epistolarum Pauli*; to which Hoffman in his *Introd. in lect. ep. ad Coloss.* objects indeed, that both Timothy and Silvanus are named together in the beginning of the Epistle to the Theſſalonians; but why might not the apostle employ two amanuenses who relieved each other in writing these epistles? The Theſſalonians, knowing the hand of both, had by this means a stronger assurance of the genuineness of the epistle. And this precaution was the more necessary, as there were not wanting impostors, who endeavoured to fix spurious epistles upon St Paul. 2 Theſ. ii. 1, 2. iii. 17, 18:

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The number of St Paul's epistles preserved in the New Testament is fourteen, including that to the Hebrews. It is probable from the fluency of his stile, that he wrote more than these; but the providence of God hath not thought fit to preserve more for the use of the church; and we have no more reason to complain of this, than that all the discourses of Christ, which were all the word of God, have not been recorded. Hence it is not incredible, that in 1 Cor. v. 9. the apostle alludes to some Epistle to the Corinthians, which is lost. This is no objection to the perfection of the holy scriptures, for it is not necessary for us to have all the writings that were ever inspired by God; it being sufficient to have so many divine books extant as are necessary to shew us with certainty the way for salvation.

SECTION CX.

The Epistle to the Galatians is the first; and written in the year 51.

THE first of the epistles of St Paul now extant seems to me to be that to the Galatians. I depart from all the moderns in this, as appears from Rumpæus's *commentatio critica*, where the different opinions are collected concerning the chronological order of all the epistles. Among the ancients I have only Marcion on my side, whose heterodoxy in other respects will not I hope affect his credit in an historical fact. See Epiphanius, *hæres.* 42. However, it is the more necessary for me to explain the reasons of my departure from the general opinion.

The first time of St Paul's coming into Galatia was soon after the council held at Jerusalem, in the year 51, Acts xvi. 6. He was willing to divulge, in the Lesser Asia, the decree of this council, which discharged

the Gentile converts from obedience to the law of Moses. It is said in ver. 6. that they went (from Lystra) throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia. It is the common opinion of interpreters, that the Proconsular Asia was here meant, i. e. the country about Ephesus; they avoided this and turned more northward to Phrygia and Galatia. Upon this journey St Paul doubtless founded the Christian church in Galatia; for though St Luke doth not expressly mention this, yet we may conclude from the constant practice of St Paul, and from the oppositions in which Asia here stands, that he preached the gospel to the Galatians, for the reason of his journey to them was, that he could not at this time preach it in Asia. This appears from Acts xviii. 23. where it is mentioned that St Paul took another journey into Galatia, and strengthened all the disciples. Consequently he made some converts the first time he passed through that country in the year 51.

Now let us follow St Paul in his first journey from Galatia as far as Berea, where he seems to have arrived the same year, and we shall be convinced that he wrote his epistle to the Galatians upon this journey.

When he left the Galatians he was accompanied by several brethren, by Silas, or Sivanus, chap. xv. 40. by Timothy, xvi. 3. and probably by Luke, who in ver. 10. speaks of the travellers in the first person plural. This circumstance merits attention. They travelled through Mysia to Troas, ver. 8. and upon St Paul's having a remarkable dream in the night, they passed into Macedonia, ver. 9—12. preached the gospel at Philippi, ver. 13—40. and at Thessalonica, chap. xvii. 1—9. Here some of the brethren left Paul, and he and Silas went to Berea, ver. 10. When he was no longer in safety here, he left Silas behind him and went

to Athens, without being attended by any of the brethren, who were with him in Galatia.

Now his epistle to the Galatians is written not only in his own name, but in the name of all the brethren which were with him, Gal. i. 2. Who were these brethren? Were they known or unknown to the Galatians? It would certainly be absurd to write to the Galatians in the name of all the brethren which were with him, without specifying their names, if the brethren were not the same, who attended him, when he left Galatia, and who were sufficiently known to them. Consequently this epistle must have been written before St Paul separated from the brethren, that is, before he left Thessalonica. I cannot more precisely determine the place where this epistle was written; it is sufficient that it was upon the journey to Thessalonica, and not as Benson imagines two years, nor as Mill pretends seven years after.

There are yet more circumstances to confirm mine, and confute the contrary opinion. St Paul mentions the perversion of the Galatians as very early, and marvels, chap. i. 6, that they were so soon removed unto another gospel. Their perversion therefore which occasioned him to write this epistle was very soon after their conversion. This argument is yet more forcible, if we take the word *καταχουρευος*, Gal. vi. 6. in the sense which it bore in the primitive times. For if the majority of the Galatians were still Catechumens, or were still instructed in the Christian religion by way of question, and answer, in order to be qualified for baptism, then they could not have been Christians so long as two, or even seven years.

It was usual for St Paul to conclude his epistles with some salutation from the churches where he resided. As he wholly omits this in the epistle to the Galatians,

he seems to have written the epistle upon his journey, and neither at Philippi nor at Thessalonica.

Asia swarmed at that time with zealots for the law, who wanted to impose the law of Moses upon the Gentiles, Acts xv. 1. So that it is much easier to place the seduction, against which St Paul endeavours to guard them, in the 51st year of Christ, than in the 54 or 58th year.

One thing more is observable, St Paul, in chap. ii. relates the course of his life, till the time of the council at Jerusalem, and at the farthest till his return to Antioch. This makes it highly probable, that except the conversion of the Galatians, nothing remarkable had happened in his life to that time. It is moreover accountable from this circumstance of the time, why St Paul mentions to the Galatians that Titus was not compelled to be circumcised, chap. ii. 3. because he had just before caused Timothy to be circumcised, Acts xvi. 3. to which perhaps his adversaries appealed.

SECTION CXI.

Of the Galatian Christians and their Seducers.

THE Galatians were descended from those Gauls who had formerly invaded Greece, and afterward settled in Lesser Asia. The present century has produced a satisfactory account of them, partly in the French history of the Gauls by M. Peiloutier, and partly in Wernsdorf's dissertation de republica Galatarum, published at Nurnberg, 1743. Jablonsky in his dissert. de lingua Lycaonica, gives an account of their native language, which they retained along with the Greek, and which is said to have come nearest to the language of Treves. Schmidt in his Prolusio de Galatis, ad quos Paulus literas misit, is singular in maintaining that St Paul did not write to the Galatians but to the inhabitants of Derbe and Lystra, which

which Lycaonian cities were reckoned a part of Galatia, because Augustus presented them to Amyntas King of the Galatians. But as St Paul planted a church among the real Galatians, why should not they be the people addressed in this epistle? His answer is, that St Paul was never in Galatia, before the council at Jerusalem; which I admit; but that the Galatians to whom he writes must have been Christians before the time of that council, because St Paul, according to Gal. ii. 5. asserted their rights at Jerusalem; for we there read that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But why might not the apostle mean the Gentiles in general, whose rights he had asserted at Jerusalem, and of whose number the Galatians were? It is at least very usual for St Paul to address the Gentiles in general in the second person plural. Besides, the epistle to the Galatians appears from its contents to have been written after the council at Jerusalem. Now as St Paul had carried the decree of this council by word of mouth to the people of Derbe and Lystra, Acts xvi. 1. it is not likely that he should be afterward obliged to write to them this epistle. At least if it had been addressed to them, we should have found some intimation that he had before remonstrated to them their error in person.

The occasion of St Paul's writing to the Galatians was the false doctrine, with which certain teachers disturbed the Christians in Lesser Asia, and endeavoured to impote upon them the whole Levitical law, or a part of it; Acts xv. 1, 2. It seems that these Pharisaical Christians, whose indirect views St Paul exposes, Gal. vi. 12, 13. at first only laboured to represent circumcision as necessary to salvation, without at the same time obliging the Gentiles to observe the whole Levitical law; Acts xv. 1. Gal. v. 2, 3. Yet they insisted upon the Christians receiving the Jewish festivals, and the sabbatical years, Gal. iv. 10. Perhaps they were silent at first,

first, on the subject of clean and unclean meats, for not a word is mentioned in the epistle to the Galatians, of the distinction of meats; of which St. Paul usually takes some notice; but he was clear in this, that circumcision would soon pave the way for the whole Levitical law.

The principal arguments they alledged were these;

1. "That the apostles at Jerusalem, Peter in particular, and the whole church of Jerusalem, considered circumcision as necessary; that St Paul was only a deputy from that church, and that his doctrine was authoritative only so far as it agreed with the doctrine of the church of Jerusalem." This rendered it necessary for St Paul to assert, not only that the apostles at Jerusalem perfectly concurred with him, but likewise that he was an immediate apostle of Christ, and neither to be considered as a deputy from the church at Jerusalem, nor as a disciple of the other apostles.

2. "That St Paul himself had changed his opinion, and now preached up the Levitical law;" Gal. i. 8, 10. v. 11. Perhaps they pleaded in support of this argument, that St Paul had caused Timothy to be circumcised just before he came to the Galatians. Acts xvi. 3. Gal. ii. 3.

3. "That all the promises of God were made to the Sons of Abraham, and that whoever would partake of the blessing upon Abraham, must like Abraham be circumcised." This is the objection which St Paul answers, Gal. iii. 7. 17. 18.

4. "That Isaiah foretold an approaching conversion of the heathens, and promised children from among the heathen to Jerusalem or Zion. If therefore the Gentiles desired to be children of the church of Jerusalem, they ought to conform to the worship and rites of that church." In answer to this St Paul shews, chap. iv. 19—21. that these children were not promised to the Jewish but to the ancient or Jebusite Jerusalem.

St Paul frequently directs toleration of the weakness of those Jews, who observed the Levitical law. In Rom. xiv. he even forbids perplexing them with disputations. He himself became as a Jew among Jews; and we have an instance in Acts xxi. 20, 24, 25, 26. that he was willing to conclude his ministry among the Gentiles with a Levitical offering. But the Galatian church consisted of Gentiles. Their very name is an evidence of this; and it is confirmed, Gal. iii. 7. and iv. 8. 12. It is absurd for Braunius in his *Selecta sacra*, and Hase in his *Biblioth. Bremensis* to deny this. The whole import of the epistle is, that the Galatians should not be circumcised. How could St Paul press this upon Jews who had been circumcised in their infancy? And he could not possibly suffer the Levitical law to take place among the Gentiles; for this would both have greatly obstructed their conversion, and have been the means of perpetuating the law of Moses in the Christian church.

SECTION CXII.

The date of the first epistle to the Thessalonians.

THE next in point of chronology are the two epistles to the Thessalonians. Thessalonica had formerly been called Therme, and upon the great victory gained over the Thessalonians by Philip of Macedon, he gave it the name of Thessalonica. In St Paul's time it was the capital of Macedonia. The ancient or heathen inhabitants of this city were infamously dissolute in their lives. Besides them the Jews were very numerous at Thessalonica; insomuch that we read Acts xvii. 1, *ἡ συναγωγή τῶν Ἰουδαίων*, the synagogue of the Jews was there, i. e. the remarkable and known synagogue of that nation. And Salonica is to this day quite a Jewish city. Now as the Jews were the first persecutors of Christianity,
we

we see the reason why this church was more exposed to persecution than the rest.

St Paul had preached the gospel in this city in the year 51, after he had left Philippi; Acts xvii. 1. Some few among the Jews received the gospel, and the Apostle endeavoured to prove to them the truth of Christianity from the prophecies of the Old Testament, ver. 2—4. But a great multitude of those heathens, who confessed one only true God, and were usually called *εἰσεμνοὶ ἄλλοις*, became converts to Christ. Hence the majority of this church consisted of native heathens, who had formerly been idolators, 1 Thess. i. 9. and probably Christianity had been propagated even among the idolatrous heathens. The Jews being ever jealous of the admission of the Gentiles to the same privileges with themselves, were alarmed at this, and raised such a disturbance, that Paul and Silvanus were obliged to quit the church of Thessalonica, before they had well founded it, after a residence of three weeks. The Jews carried their malice to far as to pursue St Paul to Berea. He left Silvanus and Timothy there, and fled to Athens, ordering them to follow him as soon as possible; Acts xvii. 14, 15. Accordingly he waited for them at Athens, ver. 16. St Luke indeed takes no notice of their actual arrival at Athens; but it appears, in 1 Thess. iii. 1, 2. Timothy did not continue long with St Paul, but was immediately sent back to Thessalonica; and it seems to be owing to his short stay with St Paul, that Luke omits the mention of his arrival. When Timothy returned again to Paul, ver. 6. he found him no longer at Athens, but at Corinth, Acts xviii. 5.

As therefore St Paul mentions all this, 1 Thess. iii. 1. 6. it follows, that his epistle was written after the second return of Timothy; and consequently not at Athens, as is pretended in the subscription. But at Corinth. St Paul resided at Corinth a year and a half, and in the former

former part of that time this epistle was probably written; for it is not likely that he would long delay rebuking the Thessalonians for the faults and irregularities which Timothy had reported to him. That he was still at Corinth, when this epistle was written, is probable from 1 Thess. i. 8. because he mentions only the faithful in Macedonia (where Thessalonica was situate), and in Achaia. So that this epistle falls into the year of Christ 52.

SECTION CXIII.

The circumstances of the Church of Thessalonica:

THE principal circumstances of the church of Thessalonica, which are material towards illustrating the two epistles to them are these;

1. It consisted, as was mentioned before, chiefly of Gentiles and of some Jewish members. As it is improbable, that St Paul, at his departure, appointed those to be teachers who three weeks before were quite unacquainted with revealed religion, it is highly probable that the teachers mentioned, chap. v. 12. were converts from Judaism, or at least such Greeks as had before embraced the Jewish religion.

2. This church, which was hardly planted, had indeed made some progress in the faith; but being still in its infancy, and oppressed by the powerful Jews at Thessalonica, it was in some danger, and required to be established in the faith. This is St Paul's object in the three first chapters. He endeavours to convince the Thessalonians of the truth and divinity of his gospel, both by the imparted miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, and by his own conduct when amongst them.

3. An error prevailed with respect to the doctrine of the last judgment, which might have created confusion in
this

this church. The Thessaonians, like most of the primitive Christians, thought the day of judgment was then impending, and would happen in their time. They imagined, that those who lived to see it take place, would have a great advantage preferably to the deceased faithful, which was probably to consist in their entering immediately upon the Millennium, of which some of the primitive Christians entertained very strange notions. Hence they grieved to excess at the death of their friends. St Paul strives to obviate this error, in the latter half of the fourth chapter. We find evident traces in 2 Theff. ii. 2. that not only epistles were forged in St Paul's name to propagate this error, but certain calculations and false prophecies were also applied to the same purpose. As to the latter, I cannot venture to determine any thing with certainty; but this much we know, that the heretic Cerinthus, who lived in the earliest times of Christianity, wrote a pretended revelation, and delivered many things concerning the Millennium. We have this upon the authority of Cajus the presbyter, whose words are preserved by Eusebius, lib. iii. hist. eccles. chap. 28. and Theodoret confirms his testimony, lib. ii. Hæret. fabul. cap. 3. The words of Cajus runs thus: "Cerinthus has attempted to impose upon us various miraculous stories by revelations as if they had been written by some great Apostle, and revealed to him (*αυτω*) by an angel. In these he pretends, that a temporal kingdom of Christ will take place after the resurrection." These words have been subject of controversy among the learned. Some are of opinion, that Cerinthus wrote these revelations in his own name, and pretended to be himself the great Apostle; others consider it as a false interpretation of the Revelation of St John. Mosheim in his Init. major. hist. Christ. sect. i. p. 459. recites the advocates for each opinion, and is somewhat undetermined which to choose, though he seems

seems to be rather inclined to the first, in which Buddeus concurs with him. The latter opinion appears to me so improbable, that I know not how it can be rationally maintained. How was it possible that Cerinthus could make use of the Revelation of St John as a divine book, in which Christ is spoken of throughout as the word of God, and the son of God? in which the most high God and father of Christ is said to be the Creator of the world, and not the Demiurges, chap. iv. 11. xiv. 7? in which Jesus is mentioned as the First and the Last? and in which the First and the Last says of himself, that he is dead? chap. i. 18. These are all contradictions to the doctrines of Cerinthus.

But I apprehend the words admit of neither of these interpretations. I need not shew this at large, as the advocates for both opinions complain of the obscurity of the words, and so confess that their interpretation doth not render them plain. But the obscurity will immediately vanish, if we interpret the words of a false revelation forged by Cerinthus, which he did not ascribe to himself, but to a great Apostle, whose name he conceals, that the fraud might not be detected by a single testimony of this Apostle. Now as he doth not name him, Theodoret was led to imagine, that he meant himself by the name of this great Apostle. I cannot determine whether this revelation of Cerinthus be the same with the pretended one of St Peter. But it appears to me probable that the Thessalonians were misled by this revelation, which perhaps was the first of all the forged ones, and that St Paul opposes it. The Revelation of St John had indeed been committed to writing at that time; but the errors of the impending day of judgment would hardly be derived from that, since it plainly mentions so many and great revolutions, and particularly the apostacy, which were to happen before the day of
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the Lord. We have therefore no cause to suspect, that St Paul meant to reject the Revelation of St John.

These dreams took their first rise from some false calculations, which the Apostle calls *λογος*. The Jews in general believed, that the Messiah would erect a temporal kingdom, in which they were to enjoy liberty and peace : but they thought the Sabbath a type of this state of tranquillity and freedom. I shall not here decide how far this expectation was well or ill grounded. The most learned Jews of the present age reject it ; and it is admitted by many Christians, at the head of whom I may justly place Vitringa. They concluded, that the kingdom of the Messiah must necessarily begin with the seventh millennium of the world : but they expected it to begin much earlier. A religious Jewish father of a family would not begin the Sabbath so late as the setting of the sun ; he will rest from his labour at three in the afternoon ; and he is yet more religious, if he begins his rest somewhat earlier. This rendered probable to them, that God would begin the rest and the Sabbath of his people some hours, that is, some centuries, earlier ; which hope is still entertained by some Jews, though the more rational part of them have no such thoughts. Now as the chronology of the Septuagint varied greatly from that of the Hebrew text, and it was an easy matter to compute, according to the Septuagint, that the world had been created 5,500 years, the impostures concluded, that the Sabbatical year, or the millennium, was near at hand. This computation seems to have excited among the Jews that general expectation of the Messiah mentioned by Suetonius and Tacitus. For that which we Christians call the Millennium was by the Jews called the Advent of the Messiah, or the kingdom of God. They knew that the Messiah was to be a king of men, and therefore called the time of his appearance

appearance the kingdom of God, and implied in this description the time when his church would enjoy peace and security, which is what we properly call the Millennium. All these errors crept into the church of Christ; and it is worth our while to know the computations which misled not only the Thessalonians, but almost all the Fathers.

4. Some of this church, who refused to subject themselves to the teachers, had at the same time given themselves up to disorder; and they seem to have carried on this unruliness, under pretence of teaching and edifying others. Against these are directed the admonitions in chap. v. 11—14.

But as St Paul had not yet fully answered his purpose, with respect to these two defects in that church, some still considering the day of judgment as at hand, and others still carrying on their disorders, he was induced soon after to write this second Epistle to the Thessalonians; in which he shews the distance of the last day from some prophecies not yet fulfilled, and gives them closer directions, how to conduct themselves towards those disorderly persons.

Grotius indeed is of opinion that this is properly the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, because a token is mentioned at the end, by which the genuine epistles of St Paul might be known from the spurious ones. But this great man seems to decide too hastily here; for it does not appear that a writer is obliged to give in the very first letter the token of those which are genuine. He is more likely to do this, when some letters have been forged in his name, than in the beginning of his correspondence.

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SECTION CXIV.

Of the city of Corinth ; and when and to whom St Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians.

WE come next to the two epistles to the Corinthians, which were written about five or six years later. St Paul wrote the second to the Theſſalonians from Corinth, where he was then eſtabliſhing a church. He reſided at Corinth a year and half; Acts xviii. 1. 11. He then took a journey through the Leſſer Aſia and Syria, ver. 18, 19. and to Jeruſalem, ver. 22. After this he returned to Ephesus, xix 1. and continued there three years, xx. 31. The firſt of the two epistles to the Corinthians ſtill extant, was written juſt before his departure from Ephesus, i. e. about the year of Chriſt fifty ſeven. This appears from 1 Cor. xvi. 8, 9. where St Paul mentions, that he ſhould tarry at Ephesus until Pentecoſt. The epistle was written about Eaſter, chap. v. 7, 8. for the expreſſion, “ye are unleavened,” amounts to this, ye are now keeping the feaſt of unleavened bread. The miſtake in the ſubſcription of the epistle, that it was written from Philippi, aroſe from 1 Cor. xvi. 5. for I do paſs through Macedonia ; whence ſome have concluded, that St Paul was then on his journey, and in Macedonia.

The city of Corinth was ſituate in Aekai, near the Iſthmus, which joins the Morea with the reſt of Greece. It had a double harbour which opened to the two neighbouring ſeas, one of them commodious for the Aſiatic, the other for the Italian trade. This ſituation contributed greatly to the wealth of the city ; and though the Roman general Mæmnius had levelled it with the ground, yet it roſe again, and deſerved once more the name of the capital of all Greece. Cicero in his orat.

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pro lege Manilia, calls Corinth lumen totius Græciæ. Cæsar had ordered it to be rebuilt and peopled with colonies from Rome. Near this city were celebrated the Isthmian games, which accounts for St Paul's allusions to these games, in his first epistle to the Corinthians.

But both these epistles are not written merely to the Christians at Corinth, but at the same time to all the Christian churches throughout Achaia; 2 Cor. i. 1. From 1 Cor. i. 2. one would almost imagine, that St Paul wrote his epistle indeed to the Corinthians, but that it was his desire, that they who conveyed it, should, in their passage, shew it to other churches. But the objection to this conjecture is, that St Paul frequently reproaches the church of Corinth in this epistle in severe terms, which would have disgraced them before those churches, to whom the epistle was exhibited. And so cautious a man as St Paul would not probably have irritated them by doing this; nor would it have been consistent with the encomium bestowed upon them a few weeks after in his journey through Macedonia. 2 Cor. vii. ix. I am therefore of opinion 1 Cor. i. 2. ought to be read, *καλητοῖς ἁγίοις σὺν πάντεσσι πικαλούμενοις τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν παντί τοῖς αὐτοῖς τοῖς καὶ ἡμῶν*; called to be saints along with (or in the company of) all that in every place call upon the name of the Lord, here and elsewhere. The apostle here intimates the fellowship between the Corinthians and all other Christians, particularly those in Asia, amongst whom he then resided.

SECTION CXV.

The State of the Corinthian church.

The state of the Corinthian church was more remarkable, and contributes more to the illustration of the epistles, than that of any church to which St Paul wrote.

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And as these epistles are the most explicit concerning the regulation of divine worship, the other apostolical epistles will receive some light from this discussion.

1. The church of Corinth consisted, like most of the rest, of a mixture of Jews and Heathens; Acts xviii. 4. Hence we sometimes find St Paul rebuking the Corinthians for Jewish errors, sometimes for Heathen licentiousness. They had even among them two chief rulers of Synagogues, Crispus, ver. 8. and Sosthenes, ver. 17 1 Cor. i. 1. It is probable, that these two persons continued, for a time at least, to preside in their Synagogues; for Christianity was still considered as a sect of Judaism, and the Jewish Synagogues were open even to the apostles.

2. The apostolical churches were all of them mixed, and some of the members were hypocrites, some profligates. This may particularly be affirmed the church of Corinth, 2 Cor. xii. 2, 21. for some were even intoxicated at their love-feasts, before they received the Holy communion, 1 Cor. xi. 21. So that the state of the Corinthian church is certainly not preferable to that of our present churches.

3. The Corinthian church had some eminent teachers, besides St Paul. Crispus and Sosthenes had been teachers before they became Christians. Aquila, in whose house St Paul lived at Corinth, 1 Cor. xvi. 18. instructed even one of the most celebrated teachers; Acts xviii. 26. and is mentioned by St Paul, as one of his principal and most intimate fellow-labourers. Apollos, a learned and eloquent Jew, had likewise resided at Corinth for a time, ver. 24—28. and seems to have been much respected among the Corinthians. But most of the persons here named were not at Corinth when St Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians. Sosthenes, Aquila, and Apollos, were with Paul; 1 Cor. i. 1. Acts xviii. 18. seems even to have left Corinth in disgust; at least he declined
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returning thither when this epistle was written; 1 Cor. xvi. 12.

4. Some sects arose in the Corinthian church, who took their names from their leaders, and blindly followed those leaders, whose learning and eloquence they magnified extravagantly; 1 Cor. i. 11, 12. These endeavoured to lessen the character of St Paul, and even to contest his apostolical dignity; which obliged him to vindicate and to praise himself; 1 Cor. ii. ix. 2 Cor. x. xi. Sometimes they accused him of not being eloquent enough; sometimes of having suppressed some of the most profound truths of christianity, and of having scarce laid the foundation upon which they intended to build, 1 Cor. iii. At one time they suspected St Paul for not taking pay from the Corinthians. They alleged, that he was either diffident of his being an apostle, or that some artifice lay concealed; chap. ix. At another time they pretended that St Paul, through diffidence of his cause, was humble and creeping at Corinth, but that his epistles were haughty and menacing; 2 Cor. x. 1. 2. 10. 11. at another time again, even his sufferings for the sake of Christ were offensive to them, being in their opinion rashly incurred; 1 Cor. iv. 8.—14. Perhaps this extraordinary objection of theirs to the apostle might be occasioned by the Jewish maxim, that “the spirit of prophecy rests only upon eminent, happy and chearful men.”

Upon reading the three first chapters of the first epistle, one would be almost inclined to think, that these sects had called themselves after St Paul, Peter, and Apollos. But the rest of the epistle plainly shews, that they were partizans of an adversary of the apostle's; and he himself writes, 1 Cor. iv. 6. that he had only used his own name, and that of his friends, by way of instances, because he chose not to expose the names of his enemies. We are therefore very little obliged to those

those commentators, who explain to us the doctrines maintained by the several sects of Cephas, of Paul, of Apollos, and of Christ, at Corinth.

Locke has thrown out the probable conjecture, that the party against St Paul had no more than one leader. Thus much is certain, that St Paul sometimes speaks in the singular number, and particularly, 2 Cor. x. 10, 11. and when he uses the plural, it might be his moderation, not to bear too hard upon a single person. In reading the epistles with attention we shall find, that some individual is secretly pointed at, by the frequent repetition of *ΤΙΣ*, a certain person.

From 2 Cor. xi. 22. it appears, that the adversary was a Jew, and valued himself upon his privilege; and this explains the affair of the incestuous marriage, which was vindicated by St Paul's adversary, and which none but a Jew could vindicate.

To speak out plainly, I suspect Crispus, who was a chief ruler of the Jewish Synagogue; Acts xviii. 8. He was the only one of the celebrated teachers, before mentioned, who still continued at Corinth; and doubtless the adversary of St Paul must have been a teacher of eminence in that church. It is usual with the apostle, to salute by name those friends of his, who were considerable enough to be pointed out to the church, to which he was writing; but though Crispus was one of the few whom Paul himself had baptized, though he was the first fruits of the Corinthian Christians, and the chief ruler of a Synagogue, yet St Paul, instead of greeting him, turns the eyes of the church upon Stephanas and his house, 1 Cor. xvi. 15. St Paul's rejoicing that he had baptized none but Crispus and Gaius, seems to be strangely placed in 1 Cor. i. 14, 15. for who would directly accuse him of having baptized in his own name, and not in that of Christ? Perhaps he meant only to remind Crispus in an oblique way, that he was his disciple,
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and had been baptized by him. However, there is this exception to my conjecture, that Crispus, who is mentioned but twice in the Bible, is not named with the addition of any censure on either of those occasions; and in Acts xviii. 8. he is even honourably spoken of. I therefore with my suspicion may be groundless.

5. A marriage of the most abominable kind had been consummated in the Corinthian church, and approved by the rest of that church, to the great offence of the heathens. A man had married his father's wife, i. e. his own step-mother. Some commentators make the matter worse, and pretend, that the father was yet living, and that either the son had committed adultery, or the father, to shew his Christian charity, had surrendered the woman to him. But as St Paul mentions not a word of the circumstance of the father's life, this is a mere invention, and the words father's wife must be taken in the sense in which they stand in the marriage laws of Moses, where they signify the dowager step-mother. They who think the father was still living, appeal indeed to 2 Cor. vii. 12. where they apprehend the person that suffered the wrong to be the father. But St Paul might mean himself; for in chap. ii. 5. he says, that the incestuous person had grieved him and the Corinthians. And how can we suppose the father to be the person who suffered the wrong, since the son could not have married her without his consent, for it is manifest from the phrase *ἡ πατέρα ἑαυτοῦ*, that he is not speaking of adultery, but of a marriage.

According to the regular laws of the city of Corinth, this marriage would not have been permitted by the heathen magistrate. For though incestuous marriages were common and lawful among the Grecians, yet Greece had been obliged to receive the Roman laws, after having been reduced to a Roman province. These laws prohibited and punished a marriage of that kind. I cannot
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strictly determine, being at a loss for authorities, what punishment the Roman laws inflicted for it, in the time of Nero, in whose reign St Paul wrote this epistle. In the time of Alexander Severus, the penalty was Deportatio, or exile into some desert island, for marrying a widow too nearly related. For Marcian, who lived in the reign of Severus, writes thus, l. 11. Institut. "Si
 " quis viduam——cognatam, cum qua nuptias con-
 " trahere non potest, corruperit, in insulam deportandus
 " est." Sec Digest. xlviii. Tit. 18. 5. Hence we may conclude how severe the laws would have been against one who married his own step-mother.

But how was it possible then to perform such a marriage at Corinth? It could not be done but under colour of the Jewish law. The Jews pretend, that a proselyte by baptism becomes a descendent of Abraham, and this in so strict a sense, that all former relations immediately cease. Hence they drew this conclusion, "That a heathen was at liberty to marry his mother, or his own sister, as soon as she was regenerated by baptism." See Maimonides in Jassur. Biah, c. 14. Selden de uxore Hebr. l. ii. c. 18. and de Jure nat. et gent. l. ii. c. 4. Now the Jews were at that time still permitted to live according to their own law, Joseph. l. xvi. c. 6. and the Christians were reckoned among the Jews. The liberty of marrying according to their own laws they retained for a long while. Theodosius was the first who deprived them of it, l. 7. c. de Judæis et Cælicolis, where we read, "Nemo Judæorum morem suum in conjunctionibus retineat, nec juxta legem suam nuptias contrahatur." So that this abominable marriage might, to the great offence of the heathens, be solemnised, under the colour of Judaism or Christianity. And the church had defended it by arguing from the Jewish doctrines of baptism and regeneration.

6. It was usual in the first Christian churches, in imitation of the Jews, to appoint an arbitrator, in cases of complaints from one Christian against another. See Vitringa de Synag. vet. l. iii. who quotes a law of Arcadius and Honorius, by which the Jews were indeed forbid to hold courts of judicature, but were allowed to have umpires elected by both parties, whose decision the Roman magistrate was bound to support and execute. As the Jews enjoyed this privilege so long after the destruction of Jerusalem, it is highly probable that they enjoyed it in greater extent before that time. The Christians being aggregated among the Jews, had the same privilege; so that the Apostles committed no invasion of the power of the magistrate, when they directed the Christian churches to decide all civil contests among Christians, who were to love as brethren by Christian arbitrators. But instead of having recourse to this method, the Corinthian Christians, to the disgrace of Christianity, laid their complaints before the heathen Magistrate, 1 Cor. vi. 1. probably with a view, as may be concluded from ver. 8. to injure the person accused, by the aid of some unjust laws, or by wresting and misrepresentation in the pleadings, which could not be practised with success before a Christian arbitrator, who decided merely according to equity.

I conclude from the beginning of the sixth chapter, "Dare any of you, &c. that the fault which St Paul censures in the Corinthians was new and unusual. I am therefore inclined to think that they were not Gentiles, but Jews, who had, regardless of their own customs and privileges, made their appeals to heathen judicatures.

7. In most of the other churches the Jews and Gentiles were at variance, because the former still adhered to the Levitical law. Corinth alone differed from other churches in this. We find in 1 Cor. x. 24—30. that some weak minds at Corinth scrupled to eat any thing
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that had been offered to idols. But as St Paul rather warns them against an abuse of liberty, as will appear, the majority of that congregation must have been free from the common prejudices of the Jews. We might almost conclude from hence, that the Jew, who strove to undermine the Apostle in that church, was not a Pharisee, nor a rigid observer of the law, but a Sadducee. For this sect were not zealous for imposing the law of Moses upon the Gentiles.

It could not be unlawful in itself to eat the meat which had been offered to idols; for the consecration of flesh or wine to an idol did not make it the property of the idol, an idol being nothing, and therefore incapable of property. This is the doctrine taught by St Paul, 1 Cor. x. 25——30. But some Corinthians, not content with this liberty, thought it lawful to go to a feast in the temple of idols, which at the same time was a place of resort for venereal purposes, and to eat the sacrifice, whilst praises were sung to the idol; 1 Cor. viii. 10. x. 20, 21, 22. This was publicly participating in the idolatry; hence St Paul so often warns them against idolatry; 1 Cor. x. 7. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17. When an act is a religious test, the place and circumstances change the lawfulness of the act. To eat the consecrated wafer will not convert a man to Popery, but to do it before a Romish altar, is to confess the religion of the church of Rome. The case is the same with eating meat offered to idols.

But the dissolute liberty of some Corinthians went farther. The majority of the heathen world considered fornication as a matter indifferent. Venus had a temple at Corinth, in which thousands of loose women were supported in honour of that deity, and for the gratification of her adorers; as we read in Strabo, l. ii. c. 16. See particularly Mosheim's exposition of this epistle. Some Corinthian Christians were disposed to prosecute this
worship;

worship; and they extended the maxim, that "All things are lawful," which was true of meats as far as fornication; 1 Cor. vi. 12. 13. St Paul therefore found it necessary often to censure fornication, and to declare it unlawful. The same scandalous tenets had taken root at Pergamos, about the time when St John wrote his Revelation, Rev. ii. 14.

8. The public worship of the primitive Christians was very different from ours. In our churches, the minister only has a right to speak and explain the scriptures; but among the primitive Christians, the laity were allowed to speak in public, for general edification. This regulation of the Christian worship was like other institutions originally derived from the Jewish Synagogue. For among the Jews, every one who was qualified for it, and appointed by the ruler of the Synagogue, might read and explain the law, Luke iv. 16, 17. Acts xiii. 15. 16. Vitringa de Synag. vet. Jud. l. iii p. ii. c. 7. But as many of the primitive Christians had received extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, it was their custom to edify the congregation by speaking alternately; 1 Cor. xiv. Some who had received the gift of tongues spoke publicly in foreign languages, and by the exercise of this gift demonstrated the truth of the Christian religion; ver. 1, 2, 4, 5, 13, 19. others expounded what these had delivered; ver. 13. This was the less offensive, as the Jews were already accustomed to read the law in their Synagogue in Hebrew, consequently in an unknown tongue, and to add a translation into the language of the country. Some prophesied, ver. 1, 6, 24, 25. that is, they spoke in a known tongue, moved by the Holy Ghost; others were employed in interpreting their prophecies, and in determining the time pointed at by the spirit of Christ which was in them; ver. 29. Some prayed as they were immediately inspired by the spirit of God, ver. 15. and some seem to have composed divine hymns by the same

same impulse, ver. 15. Eph. v. 16. The spirit which formerly animated David, taught them to praise God in songs. If any one of the congregation felt an impulse from the Holy Ghost to speak in public he was permitted; and the rest were obliged to be silent whilst he spoke; 1 Cor. xiv. 30. 31. In these cases even a woman was allowed to speak in public, as appears from 1 Cor. xi. 5. which was in other cases prohibited; xiv. 34, 35. They were not, at such times the speakers, but the Holy Ghost. But if none of the congregation felt an impulse from the Holy Ghost, then probably in imitation of the Jewish custom, a portion of scripture was read, and accompanied with an exposition and exhortation; 1 Tim. iv. 13.

I know that some interpret all that is said by St Paul concerning prophecies of the exposition of scripture. But this sense of the word *προφητεία* is not supported by a single clear instance; and as extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost are spoken of, 1 Cor. xii—xiv. and *προφητεία* is placed among them, I cannot understand it otherwise than of prophecies strictly so called. For a fuller account of the worship of the primitive Christians, I refer my reader to Benson's Essay concerning the settlement of the primitive church, &c. annexed to his exposition of the second epistle to Timothy.

9. With respect to this institution of divine worship, several errors crept in at Corinth, which I shall here enumerate.

The first was, the affectation of an unusual dress and appearance in persons of both sexes, which was of course offensive to the Greeks.

It was the custom among the Greeks for men never to appear covered. See Lucian de Gymnasiis. Whereas the Jews whenever they read the Bible or prayed, covered the head, and even veiled it. St Paul hints at this, 2 Cor. iii. 14. 15. and speaks somewhat ludicrously of this custom, which perhaps had not been introduced universally

fally among the Jews in his time, and was a mere innovation. It is at present the Jewish custom, when the law is read in the Synagogue, to draw a veil, called Tallith; and I have known conscientious Jews, who would not drink coffee without first putting on their hats and praying in private. They seem to have borrowed this custom from the Romans in the time of St Paul. The Romans thought every thing they saw during religious worship, implied an omen, and therefore took particular care to see nothing that might be interpreted a bad omen. Some were carried in a litter to avoid this; for if the unfortunate omen was not seen it was of no effect. Cicero de divinar. l. ii. 36. See more authorities on this head in Happach's Comment. de calumnia religiosa. To prevent therefore the sight of an ill omen they covered their faces. The Jews imitated them in this, as is very agreeably shewn by Lykemacher in his observat. philolog. I observe but one mistake in him. He interprets Virgil's words, *Æn.* 3. ver. 406.

"Ne qua inter sanctos ignes in honore Deorum

"*HOSTILIS FACIES OCCURRAT ET OMINA TURBET.*"

Of the "sight of an enemy" (viz. Diomedes or Ulysses, as he subjoins.) Whereas *Hostilis* means unfortunate, or inauspicious, an expression well known in Roman Augury. See Cic. de divinar.

The Christians at Corinth imitated this Jewish or Roman custom, and covered their heads when they spoke in the public congregation. This rendered the Christian church ridiculous to the Greeks; at the same time a superstitious custom was introduced into the church of Christ, though the Jews and some Romans gave it a more specious interpretation, by pretending that they covered their faces in reverence to the Deity whom they adored.

10. The women in the eastern countries are obliged to be extremely reserved, and to live in the innermost

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part of the house, where no man is allowed to approach them; and whenever they come abroad, to cover themselves with a veil. Among the Greeks, the Lacedæmonians only excepted, the women led solitary lives in the *Gynæconitæ*, as they were called, (see Cor. Nepos's preface) and their faces were covered with a veil when they appeared in public. The bridegroom was not permitted to uncover this veil, and see his bride, till the day after marriage, whence that day was called *ἀνὰ καλυπτήριον*. See Hudson upon that word, in his index to Longinus. But the festivals and religious rites of the Grecians were exempted from this custom. On these the women appeared in honour of the deity, with their faces uncovered; whence in the Greek comedies love is generally first raised in the temples.

It was therefore very offensive and reproachful for Christian women to uncover themselves in time of divine service, in a manner unusual at other times, and assume the appearance of women of ill fame among the Jews. See Num. v. 18. 1 Sam. vi. 20. and Bayle's Dictionary, under the word Babylon. We find nevertheless in 1 Cor. x. 5. that female Christians chose to be uncovered in prophesying. This again might be in imitation of the heathens; for not only the Bacchæ did the same, but some other pretended prophetesses uncovered their heads, and dishevelled their hair, in order to shew their sacred fury and enthusiastic rage. Thus we read in Virgil *Æn.* iv. ver. 509.

—— — “ crines effusa sacerdos,

“ Ter centum tonat ore Deos.” ——

And *Æn.* vi. ver. 48.

—— — “ cui talia fanti

“ Ante fores subito non vultus, non color unus,

“ Non Comite mansere comæ.” ——

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The reader therefore will not think it matter of wonder that St Paul zealously opposes so superstitious and offensive a custom, 1 Cor. xi.

11. In the exercise of extraordinary gifts many things were done which obstructed general edification. Some being vain of their gifts, so misapplied them in the congregation, that others were hindered by them from speaking; 1 Cor. xiv. 40—33. This was not practicable in the case of all gifts. No one could prophecy if the Holy Ghost did not inspire him. Whereas the gift of tongues was so conferred, that whoever possessed it could speak at all times in foreign languages, without waiting for a fresh inspiration. These therefore were the gifts chiefly misapplied, and boasted and preferred by those who possessed them. Hence St Paul takes occasion in the fourteenth chapter to shew, that these are not the most important gifts of the Holy Ghost, and at the same time to prescribe limits to the exercise of them in the congregation. Some imagine, that the false teacher opposed by St Paul, was particularly vain of speaking Hebrew, which I leave undecided. If it be true, then this teacher, who as a Jew might naturally understand Hebrew, would appear to have been an impudent impostor, who passed off a natural or artificial accomplishment of his own for a miracle. See 1 Cor. xiv. 37, 38.

12. We find in our epistle the plainest indications, that the Corinthians celebrated Sunday. They assembled *καταμικν σαββατον*, i. e. on the first day of the week, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. compared with Mat. xxviii. 1. and the words chap. xi. 20. *κυριακον, δειπνον* may, with the Syriac version, be very well rendered, A meal which suits the day of the Lord, or a Sunday's meal. It is strange, that in the controversy concerning Sunday no mention should ever have been made of this ancient version. See also

Pliny, l. x. Ep. 97. and Bohmer's *differt. prima juris ecclesiastici antiqui ad Plinium*.

On this Sunday the primitive Christians celebrated their Love-feast, or Agape, and at the conclusion of it received the holy communion. Bohmer has discussed this matter so fully in his fourth *dis. jur. eccl. &c.* that I need not add any thing, but shall refer to him without making any extracts. The eleventh chapter of our epistle shews these love-feasts to have been also customary at Corinth.

13. The Jews who lived out of Palestine were chiefly engaged in trade, and were much wealthier than those residing in Judea. They therefore annually sent relief to the poor Jews in Palestine. *Vitringa de Synag. vet. l. iii. p. i. c. 13.* Now as the Gentile Christians became brethren to the Jews, and partook in their spiritual riches, St Paul thought it equitable, and had promised James and Peter to collect the same alms among the Christians in Greece, *Rom. xv. 26. 27. Gal. ii. 10.* He made also a collection of this kind at Corinth; *1 Cor. xvi. 1.—4.*

14. Some Christians at Corinth denied the resurrection of the dead; *chap. xv. 12.* If the principal adversary was, as I conjectured above, a Saducee, it is very accountable how he came to deny what all the Saducees denied. One of the most specious arguments against the resurrection of the dead seems to have been the unsuitness of our gross body, and some members of it, for eternal life; which therefore St Paul confutes from *ver. 35.* The objection is very much like that with which the Saducees attempted to silence Christ, *Matth. xxii. 24. 28.*

SECTION CXVI.

Of the Epistle of the Corinthians to St Paul.

THE more immediate occasion of this epistle was one which the Apostle had received from the Corinthians by the hands of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus; chap. vii. 1. xvi. 17. St Paul had sent an epistle to the Corinthians before, and had warned them not to company with fornicators; 1 Cor. v. 9. This epistle is lost; for though we have an epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians in the Armenian tongue, which was published by the Whistons, and annexed to Moses Chorenensis, yet Mosheim rightly judges it to be a spurious piece. See his comment. upon the first epist. to the Cor. Now some things in this epistle having been misunderstood by them, they seem to have desired an explanation. But they desired at the same time, that Apollos would come to them again; to which St Paul returns an answer, chap. xvi. 12.

I shall not take upon me to conjecture all the contents of that epistle; but a part of the contents I think it necessary to illustrate. The Corinthians had proposed two questions to the Apostle:

1. Whether it be good and lawful in general to marry?
2. Whether it be necessary to separate from an unbelieving consort?

The former of these questions was again divided into two; for it required a distinct answer, with respect to virgins and widows; the second marriage of a widow being reputed indecent among most of the heathens. Vitringa de Synag. vet. p. 652—661.

But who was there at Corinth that could entertain any doubt about the lawfulness of marriage? Without

knowing this, we cannot understand the Apostle's answer. The ruling party of the church had certainly no such doubt; for they had even approved of an incestuous marriage, and were admonished not to consider fornication as an indifferent act. Nor could the doubters be Gentiles; for the Pythagorean philosophy, which was unfavourable to matrimony, was at that time very little in vogue; and besides, St Paul, in chap. vii. 26. advises it to be good for the present distress, to continue unmarried. Now the Christians at Corinth, who were Gentiles by birth, had no such distress impending. They might go to their graves in peace, for the persecution of Christians in the Roman provinces did not begin till after their death, or till they had arrived at an uncommon age. Whereas the Jews had a persecution impending which broke out when St Paul was carried prisoner to Rome, and gave St James occasion to write his epistle to the Christian converts from Judaism, and soon after followed the destruction of the whole Jewish state, which had been foretold by Christ, and which necessarily reduced the Jews throughout the Roman empire, even those who could have no share in the insurrection, to such distress, that it was better for them to continue unmarried. The persons then who doubted were Jews, but they were certainly not Sadducees, much less were they Pharisees, for these thought all men were obliged to marry. The Essenes held matrimony in contempt; but as we find no traces of them at Corinth, we must look farther. The Egyptian Jews might probably give rise to this question. The Jews were very numerous in Egypt, and particularly at Alexandria; these indeed were not all Essenes or hermits, and monks, but they for the most part agreed with the Essenes, in receiving the maxims of the oriental philosophy, as appears from Philo. Now the oriental philosophers thought marriage unbecoming a wise man; and if we knew this from no other records, we might gather it from the writings of
of

of the Pythagorean or Platonic philosophers, who were commonly disciples of the orientals. See Whitby upon 1 Cor. vii. 1.

As this was a question raised by weak minds, St Paul answers it with great tenderness, lest he should expose this conscientious part of the church to shame, in the eyes of those who imagined themselves strong. He would probably have returned a different answer had the question been started at Ephesus or at Colossus, where the false teachers prohibited marriage.

One more occasion of this epistle was, that he was informed by the family of Chloe, that there were contentions in the Corinthian church; chap. i. 11.

SECTION CXVII.

Contents of the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

THE epistle is best divided in the following method:

1. The introduction; chap. i. 1—9. St Paul expresses his satisfaction at all the good he knew of them, particularly at their having received the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the confirmation of the gospel.

2. He rebukes the sectaries among them, and defends himself against his adversary, to whom most of the Corinthians adhered; chap. i. 10. iv. 21.

3. He orders them to excommunicate the incestuous person, and to acknowledge no public fornicator as a brother, chap. v. 1—13.

4. He rebukes those who carried accusations to heathen judicatures, chap. vi. 1—9.

5. He teaches the Corinthians, that fornication is not an indifferent act, chap. vi. 10—20.

6. He answers their queries relating to marriage, chap. vi. 1—10.

7. He instructs them how to act with respect to the idol offerings. He judges it sinful to go to an entertainment in the temple of an idol; but not to eat the
meat

meat offered to idols, at a third place; however, he advises abstinence even from this, rather than give offence to a weak brother. He enforces this by his own example, he having abstained from many lawful things, rather than create offence to the gospel; and he takes this occasion to shew, why he accepted no pay from the Corinthians; chap. viii. 1. xi. 1.

8. He censures the unusual dress of both sexes in prophesying; chap. xi. 2——17. and

9. The irregularities committed at their love-feasts; *ve.* 18——34. and in

10. The exercise of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost; chap. xii. 1. xiv. 40.

11. He asserts the resurrection of the dead; chap. xv. 1——58.

12. He directs the manner of collecting the alms; promises the Corinthians a visit, and salutes some particulars; chap. xvi.

The best exposition of this epistle is that of Mosheim, in the German language. Locke's paraphrase of it is a work of great merit.

SECTION CXVIII.

The effect of this Epistle upon the Corinthians.

ST PAUL's first epistle wrought a different effect upon the Corinthians. Many of them entered into themselves, and the greater part bore such reverence towards the Apostle, that they excommunicated the incestuous man, 2 Cor. ii. 5——11. vii. 11. They requested the Apostle's return with tears, chap. vii. 7. and were zealous in his behalf, for they vindicated him and his office against the false teacher and his adherents; chap. vii. 7. 11. In short, they gave strong marks of an earnest repentance.

However,

However, the false teacher retained his party, and they now took larger strides than before. We see, from the tenth to the twelfth chapter, that they expressly denied St Paul's apostolical office; and furnished themselves with pretended arguments from his epistle. He had formerly promised them, (perhaps in that first epistle which is lost), to take a journey from Ephesus to Corinth, from thence to visit the Macedonians, and to return from them to Corinth; 2 Cor. i. 15, 16. But the unhappy state of the Corinthian church had altered his intention, ver. 23. since he found, that he must have treated them with severity. He was therefore willing to send them a written admonition, and to wait some time for their amendment; hence he tells them, 1 Cor. 16. 7. that he was going immediately from Ephesus into Macedonia, and from Macedonia would make them a visit, which he accordingly did; Acts xx. 1, 2. The adversary's party drew two mischievous conclusions from this:

First, they argued that St Paul was very irresolute; that "His word towards them was yea and nay," 2 Cor. i. 18. He might possibly be as changeable in his doctrines as in his resolutions. And how could such a man be a Prophet, or an Apostle? If he were invested with this character, he would not contradict himself, and recal to-morrow the promise he made to-day.

This was a very specious objection; and St Paul himself has recorded it in its full force, 2 Cor. i. 17. The objections of the ancients against the divine authority of the Apostles, and of the gospel, are in fact the most material; and my reader may possibly desire to know how this objection is answerable.

1. It cannot justly be expected in a prophet that he should be omniscient, and that his divine inspiration should extend to all possible objects. He is divinely inspired with what he is to deliver to men in the name of
God;

God ; but not with all the circumstances of human life, or of his future conduct, some years hence. He is infallible, and cannot contradict himself in those matters which he knows by inspiration ; but in other respects, he is no more than a man. This is the rational idea of a Prophet, and he is so described in the Old Testament. Moses himself was fallible, till he consulted God ; and Nathan answered the question of David, whether he should build a temple, in the affirmative, whilst he followed his own human judgement, but he dissuaded him from it, after having had a divine vision ; 2 Sam. vii. It was therefore not to be concluded from St Paul's changing a former resolution, that he was no Apostle, and his gospel not divine. This is what he intimates, 2 Cor. i. 18—22.

2 It is possible to predict a thing which is not accomplished without incurring the charge of falsehood, in a case where certain conditions are manifestly presupposed, if we continue in friendship, and I know my visits to be acceptable. If we are at variance, he will not call me a liar for ceasing to visit him.

The Prophets of the Old Testament themselves sometimes foretel things which were to take place under certain conditions, (such was Isaiah's prophecy of the death of Hezekiah, chap. xxxviii.) but did not, because the condition depended upon the wills of men, who altered it.

Thus St Paul had certainly promised the Corinthians, whilst he was upon good terms with them, to come to them again, before he went into Macedonia, in order to impart to them a second time fresh gifts of the Holy Ghost, 2 Cor. i. 15. But when the face of things was totally changed at Corinth, and they themselves did not fulfil the conditions which were presupposed at the time of the promise ; when they had fallen into errors and extravagancies, which rendered it impossible for St Paul

to impart to them the gifts of the Holy Ghost, he altered his route, and indeed with a view of sparing them, that he might not come to them again, till his epistle had produced some amendment.

The next conclusion drawn by the adversary was, the improbability of St Paul's ever coming to Corinth again, since he was afraid of him. In answer to this the Apostle says, that he had hitherto spared him and his party; but if he came and found no amendment, he should use the power committed to him as an Apostle, and punish some in a miraculous way. This would be an evidence of his apostolical office, which he chose to avoid.

SECTION CXIX.

The second Epistle to the Corinthians.

SUCH was the state of the Corinthian church, when St Paul, immediately after his departure from Ephesus, visited the church in Macedonia, Acts xx. 1. and received from Titus, whom he had sent to Corinth, an account of their amendment, 2 Cor. vii. 5, 6. And much about the same time, in the year of Christ fifty-eight, he wrote his second epistle, as appears from chap. viii. 1-5. He sent it by the hands of Titus, who at the same time had full power to forward the collection for the faithful in Judea; ver. 6. The subscription mentions, that he sent Luke along with him, which is grounded in 2 Cor. xii. 18. "I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother." But he seems here to mean that journey of Titus which took place before this epistle was written.

We have no circumstantial account of the effects of this epistle, for St Luke mentions the Apostle's journey to Corinth in very few words; Acts xx. 2, 3. This much we know, that he was at Corinth, that the contribution

tribution for the poor saints was brought thither from different parts, Rom. xv. 26. which must have been considerable, since St Paul himself carried it to Jerusalem; 1 Cor. xvi. 4. and that he tarried some months at Corinth, and was respected by some of the principal members of that church, from whom he sends salutations, Rom. xvi. 22, 23. We hear no more of the adverse party; and when Clemens Romanus wrote his epistle to the Corinthians, St Paul was considered by the Corinthians as an Apostle from God, to whose words Clemens might appeal, without apprehending any contradiction. So that he either put the false teacher to confusion, by directing against him and his followers some of those painful evidences of his apostolical office which he threatens, 2 Cor. xiii. 2, 3. or the adversary left Corinth of his own accord. Both may serve for the confirmation of our faith, and as an evidence of the Apostle's divine mission.

SECTION CXX.

Contents of the second Epistle to the Corinthians:

THE contents of the second epistle are these:

1. St Paul gives the Corinthians an account of his sufferings to that time, and of the comfort which he derived from meditating upon the resurrection of the dead, chap. i. 1—11.

2. He vindicates himself against those who would not consider him as a true Apostle, because he had altered his resolution of going immediately from Ephesus to Corinth; chap. i. 12. ii. 4.

3. He forgives the incestuous man, chap. ii. 5—11. and on this occasion tells the Corinthians how much he longed for an account of their amendment; ver. 12, 13.

4: He

4. He treats of the office committed to him, of preaching the redemption, and prefers it highly to the office of preaching the law; probably because his adversary had pretended to be a great preacher of the law, whom he again points at for the innovation of reading the law with his face covered. He farther shews, that the sufferings which accompany the gospel, are no disgrace to the gospel, nor to the ministers of it, and gives a short abstract of the doctrine he preaches; chap. ii. 14—v. 21.

5. He shews that it is his office not only to preach the redemption by Christ, but likewise to inculcate certain duties, and particularly that of flying from idolatry. This is an oblique censure to those who attend the idol-feasts; chap. vi. 1.—vii. 1.

6. He endeavours once more to win the confidence of the Corinthians, by telling them how strongly he was affectioned towards them, and how heartily he rejoiced at their amendment; vii. 2---16.

7. He exhorts them to a liberal collection for the Christians in Judea; viii. 1. ix. 15.

8. He vindicates himself against those, who thought him deficient in the necessary evidences of his apostolical office, and imputed his caution, when at Corinth, to his consciousness of not being a true apostle; chap. x.—xiii.

SECTION CXXI.

The date of the first Epistle to Timothy.

MUCH about this time, somewhat earlier, or somewhat later, St Paul wrote his first epistle to Timothy, as Benson has clearly shewn in his Prolegomena to this epistle. Others maintain, that it was written about the year of Christ sixty-five, after St Paul had been discharged from his first imprisonment at Rome, and again visited the church at Ephesus. This opinion, which is patro-

nised by Pearson, le Clerc, Mill, and others, is sufficiently exploded by this consideration, that St Paul told all the elders or bishops at Ephesus, in the year of Christ fifty-eight, that he knew they would see his face no more; Acts xx. 25. Now it is improbable, that all the elders at Ephesus died within the space of five, or seven years at the most; and we know from 1 Timothy i. 3. that St Paul had left Timothy at Ephesus, before he wrote this epistle, whence it follows, that he was at Ephesus himself not long before.

But the principal arguments urged by Benson are these;

1. It appears plainly from the third chapter of this Epistle, that no Bishops had been appointed at Ephesus, when the first to Timothy was written. St Paul gives Timothy directions what sort of persons to appoint for bishops and ministers; and had thoughts of returning to Ephesus very soon. He could not have in view a single vacant bishoprick. As the apostles left an infant church for some time without bishops, till they were better acquainted with the people; it seems as if the church of Ephesus was not then provided with bishops. Now it is highly improbable, that St Paul would leave that church without governors, for a long time after his departure. He left them, when he travelled into Macedonia and Greece, Acts xx. 1. This journey took up less than half a year, and we find that the church of Ephesus had bishops at his return; Acts xx. 17, 28. Consequently this epistle must have been written upon this journey, and at the very beginning of it. For when he returned from Corinth into Asia, Timothy was no longer at Ephesus, but was attending St Paul; Acts xx. 4.

2. When the first epistle to Timothy was written, Timothy was in danger of being despised on account of his youth; 1 Timothy iv. 12. Now St Paul took him
along

along with him to preach the gospel when he came to Lystra, in the year fifty; Acts xvi. 1. He cannot be supposed to have been less than twenty years of age; and if this epistle was not written till the year sixty-five, after Timothy had preached the gospel fifteen years, and when he was at least thirty-five years of age, he could be in no danger then of being despised on account of his youth. But there was danger of this, when he was only in his twenty-seventh year.

I therefore concur with Benson, in dating this epistle at the time of St Paul's journey into Macedonia, of which we have an account, Acts xx. 1. Timothy, after having been sent to Corinth, must have returned to the apostle at Ephesus. St Paul left this church earlier than he intended, being driven away by the insurrection, which Demetrius raised; he therefore left Timothy behind him, 1 Timothy i. 3. to restore perfect order in the church, to fill the ecclesiastical offices, and to withstand false teachers.

Now as Timothy knew very well the charge committed to him, an epistle like this was not necessary for his sake. But as some of the Ephesians would not obey him, and others attempted to force themselves upon him, as bishops and ministers, St Paul wrote this epistle, which he might lay before them, as his commission. So that it is rather an epistle to the Ephesians, than to Timothy. See 1 Timothy i. 3. 18. iv. 6. 12, 13. v. 23. which passages, as well as others, receive a light from this observation.

As to the person of Timothy, we have an account of him in Acts xvi. 1—3, which is confirmed in other parts of the New Testament, where he appears to have been the almost constant companion of St Paul.

SECTION CXXII.

Of the Sect of the Essenes in general.

It is indispensably necessary to know the state of the church at Ephesus, in order to understand the epistles of St Paul to Timothy and to the Ephesians. But previous to this, it is necessary to give some account of the Essenes, a Jewish sect, who began to gain ground at Ephesus, and to threaten great mischiefs to Christianity; which occasioned St Paul openly to declare against them in the epistles just mentioned, and that to the Colossians.

The accounts of the ancients concerning this sect occur in four writers. Philo, the famous Jew, mentions in a book, in which he proves the maxim, that every virtuous man is free; and more fully in his book *de vita contemplativa*. He likewise touches upon the Essenes, in his apology for the Jews, in a passage preserved by Eusebius in his *præp. evang.* viii. 10. Philo calls him in Greek by the name of *Therapeutæ*, i. e. Physicians, which is no other than a translation of the Egyptian word, Essenes; see the *Thes. epist.* la Crozianus, T. iii. p. 168. We need not wonder that he speaks favourably of them, for Philo lived in Egypt, and had been trained up to Egyptian sentiments from his infancy; he had attached himself to the Pythagorean, or to the Platonic sect, both of which had their origin from Egypt. Hence it was natural for him to commend the Essenes, they having connected the Egyptian philosophy with the principles of the Jewish religion. It is rather matter of wonder, that Josephus, who was a Pharisee, judged so favourably of them. But he was blinded by the external appearance of a sanctity, which was extravagant and inconsistent with the rational system of morals, which induced St Paul, whose judgment was more penetrating

penetrating, to reject and condemn it. Josephus treats most fully of the Essenes, l. ii. de bello Judæico, c. 8. But there are other shorter accounts of them in B. xii. xv. xvii. and xviii. of his Jewish antiquities, all which passages deserve to be read. Pliny, l. v. hist. nat. cap. 17. gives two accounts of them, which do not occur in Philo and Josephus; and Solinus in his Polyhistor repeats Pliny's words, with the addition of some errors and fables.

It would be tedious to recite the modern writers on the subject of this sect; * but I must mention the controversy between the Jesuit Serrarius on the one side, and Drusius and Joseph Scaliger on the other. The similitude between the church of Rome, and the superstition of the Essenes, induced Serrarius to look out for an honourable origin for these. He made them Asideans, and derived them from the Rechabites mentioned in the Bible; but pretended at the same time, that Essenes were the first Christian monks. These are the chief points denied by his two adversaries; though with respect to the last, I agree with the Jesuit. The Essenes were indeed a Jewish and not a Christian sect; but it is manifest from the before-mentioned epistles of St Paul, that to the great mortification of the apostle, they crept very early into the Christian church. Eusebius, l. ii. hist. eccles. c. 17. shews at large, that the monastic life was derived from the Essenes; and as many Christians adopted their customs, Epiphanius, hæres. 29. mistakes all the Essenes for Christians, and confounds them with the Nazarenes, which might be occasioned by the name, for the Essenes, as well as the Nazarenes of the Old Testament, led an austere life, and abstained from wine. However it is no honour done to monkery to derive it from the Essenes; for St Paul frequently cautions against

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that

* See Fabricii lux salutaris toti orbi exoriente, c. iv. p. 55.

that sect, and in the fourth chapter of this epistle, declares before hand, that the apostacy which the spirits foretold, would come from them. If therefore Serrarius confesses the monks to be no other than successors to the Essenes, monkery may appear to be a branch of the apostacy described, 1 Timothy iv. 1—4.

Of the controversy among the moderns on the subject of the Essenes, we have an account in Mosheim's Institut. major. hist. eccles. &c. Montfaucon and Helyot attempt to prove them Christians, but the former has been confuted by Bouhier. Lange in his two dissert. de Therapeutis in Ægypto et Essenis, pretends, that they were nothing more than circumcised Egyptians; but he answered by Heumann. I find in the Thes. epist. la Crozian. T. iii. p. 170. that M. la Croze too thought them circumcised Egyptians; and that Jablonky intended to write about them, but I never heard that he did. The testimony of Philo, that they were Jews appears to be more credible, than the mere conjectures of the moderns; however no one is, in my opinion, better qualified to write a history of the Essenes, than Jablonky.

SECTION CXXIII.

The Essenes derived their doctrine from the Egyptian or Oriental Philosophy.

A MODERATE knowledge of the Essenes will serve to inform us, that they were Jews who received the Egyptian philosophy, and connected it with Judaism; and the greater part of them lived in Egypt. Josephus himself observes, B. xv. of the Jewish Antiq. that they very much resembled the Pythagorians; and it is well known that Pythagoras imported his philosophy from Egypt. Now as neither Philo, nor Josephus, hath left us a regular system of the Essene doctrines, but only re-
corded

corded fingle, and those incoherent, tenets of that sect, all which are Egyptian or Pythagorean, a commentator upon St. Paul's epistles would find it well worth the pains to search for the first principles of the Essene doctrines in the Egyptian philosophy. Jamblichus's celebrated book *de mysteriis Egyptiorum* may be of great use for the purpose, and in general the modern Platonics, as they are called, who taught at Alexandria, did not so much receive the doctrines of Plato, as the Egyptian philosophy. It is likewise necessary to consult the writings of the disciples of Pythagoras, particularly the fragments of Porphyry; and the ancient and modern accounts of the Indian Bramans; it being evident, that the philosophy of the Egyptian priests and of the Bramans is fundamentally the same *. There is a superstitious sect in China, which arrived from India about the year of Christ sixty-five, whose tenets agree exactly with this corrupted philosophy, (see du Halde T. iii.) which in general was never more flourishing than in the first century. It penetrated on one side into China; the Chaldeans who corrupted Italy, were devoted to it; Appollonius Tyaneus, the great imposture of the first century, learnt it in the remotest parts of the East, and the Gnostics and Essenes interwove it with Christianity.

The whole oriental philosophy, in which I comprehend the Indian, Egyptian and Pythagorean, maintained

* See an account of the writers concerning them in Fabricii dissert. de Brachmanibus, in his Sylloge, p. 327. The Gymnosophists, or naked philosophers, had in their main doctrine many things in common with the Bramans. Their history therefore must be consulted, in order to form a compleat idea of the oriental philosophy. If a work of this kind were drawn up, it would throw a considerable light upon the origin both of religion and heresies. If I had abilities, to developpe so intricate a subject, I should not want inclination.

ed the following principles, which may be of use to explaining the doctrine of the Essenes.

1. God never appears but in the company of many demons or angels. These are our mediators with God, and in order to be acceptable to God, we must worship the demons. Jamblichus treats fully of this.

2. The soul is a pure divine fire, but it is defiled by the body, and seduced to violent passions, and even to vice. All meats, which nourish the body, defile the soul; every bodily enjoyment is a pest to the soul. The more the body is tormented, the more the soul advances in holiness and purity. Death is a happy event for the soul, which it delivers from its ignominious prison. But the soul is immortal, and sometimes transmigrates after death into other bodies.

3. There is great mystery in numbers, particularly in the number seven, which, as Cicero says, in his *somnium Scipionis*, is the knot and cement of all things. See *Tulc. quæst. l. i. c. 10.*

SECTION CXXIV.

The principal doctrines and practices, which the Essenes drew from the oriental philosophy. St Paul wrote some epistles against them.

FROM these principles, we may comprehend what is related of the Essenes by Philo and Josephus.

“They concealed the names of their angels as sacred.” Probably these angels were their mediators with God, in which the other Egyptian Jews, and even Philo himself, concurred with them.

“They abstained from blood, and those in Egypt
 “would not even offer a sacrifice, because they con-
 “sidered the slaying of beasts as sinful. They regarded
 “wine as a poison, which deprives us of our senses,
 “and

“ and lived upon bread, salt, water and hyfop at the
“ most.” Solinus indeed pretends, that they ate dates,
but he seems to have misunderstood Pliny, from whom
he copies, and who calls the sect of the Effenes, *socia
palmarum*, i. e. a people who dwelt near palm trees.
“ They even thought it dangerous to the soul, to satifi-
“ fy the body. Many did not eat oftener than once in
three days, and some but once a week; and this in the
“ night, because they esteemed it a work fit only for
“ darkness, to relieve the wants of the body. They
“ thought themselves greatly defiled after touching oil,
“ or a young man, and were obliged to wash the part
“ carefully. Most of them abstained from marriage,
“ and thought it an obstacle to the search after wisdom.
“ The places in which they pursued their meditations,
“ and which they held sacred, they called Monastries.
“ All ornamental dress they detested. They maintained
“ a perfect community of goods, and an equality in ex-
“ ternal rank, for they considered vassalage as a vio-
“ lation of the law of nature. They believed the soul
“ would live for ever;” but seem to have denied the
resurrection of the body, which, according to them,
would only render the soul sinful by being reunited
with it.

“ They attributed a natural holiness to the Sabbath
“ day, because it is the seventh day, and the number
“ seven results from adding the sides of a square to those
“ of a triangle. They therefore observed the Sabbath-
“ much more strictly than other Jews, insomuch, that
“ they were afraid on this day to do the most necessary
“ offices of nature.

“ They spent most of their time in contemplations,
“ which they called philosophical,” with which all the
places referred to in Philo and Josephus, abound.

Before I proceed further, I submit it to the judge-
ment of my reader, whether St Paul’s first epistle to Ti-
mothy

mothy, and those to the Ephesians and Colossians, were not levelled at the errors of the Essenes. These three epistles are doubtless connected together. The epistle to the Colossians is like that to the Ephesians, both in its language and contents; insomuch that one illustrates the other. In these three epistles the apostle shews the superiority of Christ to the angels, and warns the Christians against worshipping angels. He censures the observation of Sabbaths, rebukes those who forbid marriage, and the touching of certain things; who deliver commandments of men concerning meats, and prohibit them. He permits Timothy to drink wine, blames those who abstain from nourishing their bodies, and enjoin bodily exercise. He cautions against a philosophy which teaches all these things, and against persons, who assume a great appearance of wisdom and virtue. He delivers Hymenæus over to Satan, because he pretended, that there was no resurrection of the flesh. Are not all these things advanced in opposition to the Essenes? and the expressions made use of are for the most part the same which Philo uses in stating the principles of the Essenes.

The only objection is, that as the Essenes resided not in cities, but dwelt in the deserts, it is improbable that the Christian church at Ephesus could be infected by them. But though they were not fond of living in cities, yet they dwelt near the great cities. Philo mentions that those in Egypt lived mostly in the neighbourhood of Alexandria; So that they were near enough to populous places to do as much mischief as if they lived in them. The objection would quite vanish, if we might judge of the Essenes from the Bramans, who acted the same part in India with the Essenes in Egypt, and had the same system of morals. For though it was not usual for the Bramans to live in towns, yet some lived in towns, (see Curtius l. viii. c. 9.) but we shall soon see the occasion of their sowing their tares at Ephesus.

SECTION CXXV.

*The more immediate occasion of the propagation of the
Essene errors at Ephesus.*

THE first time of St Paul's passing through Ephesus was about four years before he wrote this letter when he intended to sail from Corinth to Syria, Acts xviii. 19. He had then preached the Gospel for the first time at Corinth, and travelled from thence, in performance of a vow, to Jerusalem. It doth not appear to have been his intention at all to go to Ephesus in this journey, for St Luke writes, ver. 18. that he embarked for Syria; but some accident unknown to us brought him to Ephesus. He seems not to have preached to the Gentiles this time not intending to stay long. St Luke only mentions, that he taught in the synagogue. Some of the Jews pressed him to stay longer, but he refused them, and promised to come again soon. These Jews were either well disposed towards Christianity, or had actually received it. He left Aquilla and Priscilla at Ephesus, and travelled himself to Jerusalem, or went up, as it is expressed in ver. 22. See my father's dissert. de notione superi et inferi in Chorographiis sacris, sect. 36—38.

In the mean time a remarkable person arrived at Ephesus, namely, the eloquent and learned Jew, Apollos; ver. 24. St Luke observes of him, that "He was instructed in the way of the Lord," i. e. in the religion of Christ, for this is commonly called by St Luke the way. The words *επισκευασμένος*, made use of by St Luke, seems to indicate, that he had only learned the fundamental truths of Christianity, and had not long ceased to be a catechumen. But he supplied this defect by being well versed in the scriptures of the Old Testament, and by having learnt the doctrine concerning the Messiah there. St

Luke

Luke farther relates, that "He knew only the baptism of John, i. e. he knew, that John baptized even Jews in a very extraordinary way, who by submitting to baptism, declared themselves as impure as those heathens were who were wont to be baptized when they embraced Judaism; moreover that Jesus was the Messiah, to whom John referred those, whom he baptized, and that the Messiah would pour out the gifts of the Holy Ghost abundantly. For this was the doctrine taught by John at his baptism. But on the other hand, he knew not yet that the promise made by John was actually fulfilled, and that Christ had already baptized with the Holy Ghost. That this was actually the opinion of St Luke, when he says Apollos knew only the baptism of John, appears from chap. xix. 1—7, where twelve other disciples of John, whom St Paul found at Ephesus, in answer to the question, whether they had received the Holy Ghost, said, that "They had not so much as heard, whether there be any Holy Ghost." They could not possibly say that they had never heard of the Holy Ghost at all; but only, that they knew not, whether the great promise was already accomplished, that the Messiah was to baptize with the Holy Ghost. So that Apollos was still very deficient in his knowledge, insomuch that Aquila and Priscilla found it necessary to instruct him farther. Acts xviii. 26.

He taught Christianity publicly in the synagogue, from an honest and warm heart, before he had been sufficiently instructed; ver. 26. Perhaps the Essenes found their way into the church of Ephesus by the means of this first teacher. He was a Jew of Alexandria in Egypt. Philo tells us, that the Essenes dwelt chiefly about Alexandria, and it appears from the writings of Philo, that celebrated Alexandrian Jew, in how great reputation the Essenes were at Alexandria. It is highly probable, that before Apollos was better instructed, his
defective

defective knowledge occasioned him to be blinded by that external appearance of wisdom and sanctity with which the Essenes captivated men's minds. He was a disciple of John, and we know from the gospels, that his disciples fasted often. Hence he was the better disposed towards a sect which practised fasting and bodily exercise to so great a degree.

He was not the only disciple of John at Ephesus, for when St Paul returned to that city about a year after, chap. xix. 1. and Apollos had left Ephesus to go to Corinth, he found at Ephesus twelve Christians, who had been baptized only with the baptism of John, and knew nothing of the effusion of the Holy Ghost; ver. 2—7. One would almost conclude from this ignorance, that they lived more in retired places than in large cities; for whoever acknowledged Jesus to be the Messiah, and expected the effusion of the Holy Ghost, could not be so ignorant, twenty years after the ascension of Christ, as never to have heard of the effusion of the Holy Ghost, and of the preaching of the Apostles, had he not lived retired from the world. Perhaps these twelve disciples were also Egyptian hermits; or possibly they had spent the former part of their lives in the desert of Judea, where John formerly preached. This desert was likewise inhabited by Essenes; for Pliny tells us, that they were pretty numerous about the Dead-sea, in the neighbourhood of Engeddi. Which ever opinion we adopt, it is highly probable that these first fruits of the church of Ephesus were either Essenes themselves, or favourers of that sect. I therefore do not in the least accuse these twelve men, to whom St Paul imparted the gifts of the Holy Ghost, of having been Seducers. I believe they heartily embraced the doctrine of Christ; but as the infancy of this church consisted of such Christians as were before not averse at least to the doctrines and practices

of the Essenes, it becomes the more easy to conceive how this pernicious weed grew up at Ephesus.

I would add one conjecture, which stands in need of farther proof, that perhaps the vagabond Jews Exorcists, mentioned Acts xix. 13. who attempted to cast out evil spirits in the name of Jesus and of Paul, might be Essenes. For the Essenes are known to have applied themselves to superstitious arts, and particularly to have dealt with the Angels. Some of them pretended to prophecy, of which we find many instances in Josephus; others healed diseases, and as Josephus expressly mentions, made use of herbs for this purpose, whose virtues they pretended to be better acquainted with than others. Now we know that the Jews derived almost all diseases from the devil, and that in casting out devils they superstitiously made use of a root, by affixing which to a ring, they pretended thus to draw the devil out of the nose of the person possessed. See Josephus de bell. Jud. l. vii. c. 2. 23. These are arts very well suited to the manner of life, and the principles of the Essenes. However these exorcists might possibly be Pharisees, Matt. xii. 24, 27. I have therefore stated it as a mere conjecture, which I entreat others to examine.

SECTION CXXVI.

Some other circumstances of the church of Ephesus.

AFTER Apollos had left Ephesus, St Paul returned thither about the year of Christ 55, and resided there three years; Acts xx. 32. His conduct is sufficiently related by St Luke in the nineteenth chapter. I have only three observations to add;

1. Ephesus was the capital, not only of the Proconsular Asia, but of Asia on this side Mount Taurus. It was the custom annually to exhibit public spectacles there,

there, in the month of March or April, which were frequented by persons of distinction from other parts of Asia. See Solomon van Till's *Ifagoge* in *ep. ad Ephel.* This gave St Paul an opportunity of preaching the gospel in the adjacent countries; Acts xix. 10. and the other churches in Asia were considered as the daughters of the church of Ephesus. Hence appears what will be asserted hereafter, that the epistle to the Ephesians was at the same time an epistle to the other churches in Asia.

2. An extraordinary multitude of heathens embraced the faith at Ephesus; insomuch that Demetrius the goldsmith apprehended he should be undone, as the demand of his temple of Diana ceased. This perfectly agrees with the account given fifty years after by Pliny, of the prodigious number of Christians in the Lesser Asia, l. x. ep. 97. It was therefore natural for heathen licentiousness to creep into this church, and some Ephesians pretended that idol offerings might be eaten, and fornication be committed with a good conscience; Rev. ii. 6. 14. But we find few traces of this in the epistles to Timothy and to the Ephesians.

3. St Paul had a virulent adversary in the church of Ephesus, in the person of Alexander the Jewish cooper-smith, who was probably of the sect of the Pharisees.

SECTION CXXVII.

The time and occasion of the Epistle to the Romans.

THE Epistle to the Romans was written after St Paul's second arrival at Corinth, when he was setting out for Jerusalem with the supplies which had been collected in Macedonia and at Corinth, that is, towards the end of

the year of Christ 58, Rom. xv. 25—27. xvi. 1. The immediate occasion of writing this epistle was, the journey of Phebe from Corinth to Rome. But the principal motive which induced the Apostle to write it, was that he thought it his duty, as an Apostle of the Gentiles, to instruct the church at Rome, where no Apostle had yet been authoritatively in the principal doctrines of Christianity. As it was the custom of the Jews to corrupt the Gospel of Christ by various additions, he had reason to apprehend that the Romans would be doubtful whom to believe, since they had not received the gospel from any Apostle immediately commissioned by Christ. He therefore found it necessary to lay before them a short abstract of the principal truths of the gospel, which it was so much the practice to corrupt.

He dictated this Epistle to one Tertius, chap. xv. 22. whom some imagine to have been Silas, because *τρί* signifies Three. This conjecture would be well grounded, if Silas were an Hebrew name; but if Silas and Silvanus be the same name, it is groundless.

SECTION CXXVIII.

Of the planting, and the teachers of the Church at Rome.

THE Christian church at Rome appears not to have been planted by any Apostle. St Paul had never been at Rome before, Rom. i. 13. and modern writers have sufficiently exploded the fable, that St Peter converted the Romans to Christianity, and afterwards continued among them as bishop. At least it is certain that St Peter was not at Rome, either about the time when this epistle was written, or some years after, when St Paul himself came thither. For he is neither saluted

by

by St Paul in this epistle, nor is any salutation sent from him in those which St Paul wrote at Rome. Besides, he mentions in Col. iv. 10, 11. the comfort he had received at Rome from his fellow workers of the circumcision, but mentions not a word of St Peter.

Among those who were present at the first effusion of the Holy Ghost, and adored this great miracle with devout admiration, we find some strangers of Rome, i. e. persons who dwelt indeed at Rome, but enjoyed not the privilege of citizens of Rome, some of which were Jews by birth, others converted heathens or proselytes; Acts ii. 10. It is highly probable, that at their return to Rome these persons proclaimed the doctrine of Christ in that capital of the world. After this many Christians who had been converted elsewhere, may be supposed to have spread the gospel at Rome in their journeys thither. It appears from Rom xvi. how considerable a number of good Christians were then at Rome with whom St Paul had been acquainted elsewhere. The principal of these were,

1. Aquilla and Priscilla, who had attended St Paul for some years at Corinth and Ephesus, and even instructed Apollos in the doctrine of Christ; and in whose house a part of the church at Rome assembled; ver. 3—5.

2. Andronicus and Junia, who had formerly been fellow prisoners with St Paul on account of the gospel, and were in Christ before him; ver. 7. St Paul calls them persons "of note among the Apostles." He means not Apostles of Christ, but Apostles of the churches. As they were Jews by birth, it is probable that they were deputed to Rome from the church at Jerusalem, in order to establish the faithful Jews at Rome in the Christian doctrine, and to preach the gospel.

3. Rufus, ver. 13. whose father had assisted in carrying the cross for Christ, Mark xv. 21.

Hence it was not matter of wonder, that a flourishing church had been planted at Rome without an Apostle. However the Christian converts at Rome could not yet have received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, because no Apostle had yet been among them. Accordingly St Paul writes, chap. i. 11. that he longed to see them, in order to impart unto them some spiritual gift.

SECTION CXXIX.

The erroneous doctrines of some Jews concerning Justification.

ST PAUL alludes less than usual in this epistle to the particular state of the church, to which he was writing, because he was not yet acquainted with them, and they were not yet become his spiritual children. The epistle was properly doctrinal, and is best understood by knowing what erroneous notions the Jews had of Justification, and of the election of their nation; and how they were affected towards the Roman magistrates. We are in fact more concerned here with the errors than with the orthodox doctrines of the Jews; but it is to be observed that these errors were not embraced by all the Jews, for there are sometimes even in the Talmud remains of the most orthodox theology. They were chiefly maintained by the most zealous among the Pharisees.

As to the first of these, the doctrine of the justification of a sinner before God, no Pharisee, no Jew, who was esteemed by the rest as orthodox, ever maintained that man could be justified by a perfect observance of the law. The whole Jewish church unanimously confesses, that no man is exempt from sin. This therefore could not possibly be the doctrine combated by St Paul. Nor could any orthodox Jew ever persuade himself that

our past sins were forgiven merely upon our endeavouring to lead a new life; for he knew that God had appointed sacrifices for sin, and had promised forgiveness to the sacrifice. It could not therefore be the design of St Paul to shew, that we could not obtain remission of sins by a subsequent course of piety and obedience to the moral law. And indeed had this been his design, he would have been at a loss for arguments fully to prove it.

The Jews assigned three grounds for justification;

1. "The extraordinary piety and merits of their ancestors, and the covenant made by God with these holy men." Among these holy ancestors they reckoned, not only Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, according to scripture; but likewise the twelve patriarchs, notwithstanding some transactions of theirs, related by Moses, which among us would have been capitally punished. But it is common for men to claim justification from God on very unreasonable terms. They thought the piety of the patriarchs so very extraordinary, and particularly the painful circumcision of Abraham in his advanced age, so meritorious a work, without any obligation from the law of nature, that God could not hate the children of such pious parents. God having besides made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to bless their posterity, it was thought that this covenant obliged him to forgive their sins. I shall quote some passages to this purpose, partly of my own collecting, and partly borrowed from Whitby.

We read in Hof. iii. 2. "I bought her (the woman whom Hosea married, and who was here an image of the people of Israel) to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley." Upon this Kimchi comments thus: "Some interpret this of the merits of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, and the homer and half

“ half homer are fifteen ephahs, which signifies Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, and the twelve princes, who “ went out of Egypt.”

Pocock in his *Miscell.* p. 172, and 227, shews it to have been the hope of the Jews, that hell-fire would have no power over any Jew, because Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, will come down to deliver them. This superstitious hope has been adopted from the Jews by Mahomedans, who, in contradiction to the Koran, believe, that Christ, David, and Moses, will on the last day deliver from hell, by their intercession, those who have believed their doctrine, even after it had been abolished by Mahommed. It is a capital maxim among the Jews, that all Israel partakes of eternal life, which maxim is placed at the beginning of the book *Pirke Aboth*. Thus likewise they teach that God promised Abraham, if his children were wicked, he would consider them as righteous on account of the sweet odor of his circumcised foreskin. *Pugio Fidei*, p. iii. *Disc.* iii. chap. 16.

The same is objected to the Jews by Justin Martyr: “ Your Rabbies deceive themselves and us, in imagining “ that the kingdom of heaven is prepared for all those “ who are of the natural seed of Abraham, even though “ they be sinners and unbelievers.”

The Jews even go so far as to pray in the name of their ancestors, and to plead their merits before God. The words of Psalm lxxxiv. 9. “ Behold O God our “ shield,” are rendered by the Chaldee, “ Behold the “ merits of our fathers ;” and the words of Isa. xlv. 5. “ Another shall call himself by the name of Jacob,” are translated both by Jonathan, and the Septuagint, “ Shall “ pray in the name of Jacob”

St Paul confutes this error at large on another occasion, in chap. ix. where he shews, that the promises of God were not made to all, but only to the faithful descendants

scendants of Abraham. The latter half of the fifth chapter is to the same purpose, for there St Paul confirms the assertion of chap. iii. ver. 29. 30. that God is equally the God of Jews and Gentiles; and shews, that as all men, both Jews and Gentiles, incurred death by one common father or representative of their race, whom they did not elect, but received from God; so it is just, that when God determined to have mercy upon some, he should restore life to all, both Jews and Gentiles, by one common head of the covenant.

2. The next ground of justification was, "a perfect knowledge and diligent study of the law of Moses." The Jews had a pre-eminence before the Gentiles in this, and they estimated it so highly before God, as to make it a plea for the remission of all their sins and vices. St Paul therefore found it necessary to prove in the second chapter, that man is not justified by the knowledge, but by the observance of the law.

3. The third ground was, "The works of the Levitical law," which were to expiate sin, especially circumcision, and the sacrifices, to which God had promised remission of sins.

In opposition to this, St Paul teaches that the Levitical law doth not expiate sin, but reveals the punishment due to sinners, and exemplifies it in the sacrifice of beasts; Rom. iii. 20. v. 20.

The consequences of this doctrine are obvious. It followed that the Jews had a much nearer way to justification than the Gentiles, and that the Gentiles must receive the law of Moses, in order to be justified and saved.

SECTION CXXX.

The doctrine of the Jews at that time concerning Election.

THE doctrine of the Jews concerning election, which St Paul confutes in the ninth chapter, was quite shocking. God had promised Abraham to bleis his seed, to give him not only the true and spiritual blessing, but to give him the land of Canaan, to suffer him to dwell there in prosperity, and to consider him as his church upon earth. The Jews extended this to their whole nation, contrary to all probability, and asserted, that God was bound to fulfil these promises to their nation, whether they were righteous or wicked, faithful or believing. It was a foolish pretence; for they themselves could not deny, that the Ishmaelites and Edomites, though descendants of Abraham, had no share in these promises, and especially in the land of Canaan; and that in the time of Isaiah God might have destroyed the greater part of his people by the hands of the Assyrians, without violating his promise. St Paul makes this very objection, chap. ix. and concludes from it, that God still keeps his promise by acknowledging, as his people, the few Jews who believed in Christ, though he should judicially destroy the rest.

They even went so far as to believe, that a Prophet ought not to pronounce against their nation the prophecies with which he was inspired; but was bound to stop the hand of God, and after the example of Moses immediately to intercede for the people, and to pray, that God would rather expunge his name out of the book of the living. This will explain the reason why St Paul, in the five first verses of the ninth chapter, makes so cautious

cautious and almost timorous a transition to the point which he was about to discuss.

As it may appear incredible that doctrines so monstrously absurd were ever maintained by the Jews, I shall briefly cite a passage from Kimchi upon Hos. i. 2. "Our Rabbies relate on occasion of the words, And the Lord said unto Hosea, that the Holy and Ever-blessed said unto Hosea, the Israelites have sinned. He ought to have answered, O Lord of the world, they are thy children, the children of thy chosen, the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; have mercy upon them. But he not only omitted saying this, but even said, the whole world is thine, exchange them for another people.

"Then the Holy and Ever-blessed said, What shall I do with this old man? I will tell him, take thee an harlot; and afterward I will tell him, put her away from thee. If he can do this I will also separate myself from Israel." (It is observable that in the mean time Hosea prophesied, for some years, against the Israelites, till three children were born unto him). "After she had brought him forth two sons and a daughter, the Holy and Ever-blessed said unto him, Hosea, oughtest not thou to learn from thy master, Moses? After I had spoken unto him, he separated himself from his wife; do thou also separate from thine. Hosea said, O Lord of the world, I have children by her, and I cannot possibly put her away. The Holy and Ever-blessed said, Canst thou not do this, Hosea, notwithstanding that she is a harlot, and her children are spurious. So it is with me; the children of Israel are my children, the children of my chosen, of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and they are one of my three possessions. And yet thou hast said, exchange them for another people.

"As

“ As soon as Hosea observed, that he had sinned, he
 “ begged for mercy. But the Holy and Ever blessed
 “ said, Whilst thou art begging for mercy, pray for
 “ mercy upon Israel. That moment he began to bless,
 “ and said, the number of the children of Israel shall be
 “ as the sand of the sea.” This whole story is taken
 from the book *שמות*, and the chapter *Haifcha*. These
 Jewish errors at once illustrate that difficult ninth chap-
 ter, in which St Paul only shews that God was not
 obliged to bestow happiness here and hereafter upon the
 unbelieving Jews; and that he could as well permit
 them to harden themselves, and provoke his judgments,
 without violating his word, as he permitted the like be-
 fore in the case of Pharaoh.

SECTION CXXXI.

The conduct of the Jews towards the Roman Emperor.

IT is well known that the Pharisees were not well
 affected to the civil magistrate, and by the misinterpre-
 tation of the words, Deut. xvii. 15. made a conscience
 of not paying tribute to the Roman Emperor, and ac-
 knowledging him for their sovereign. (See Josephus
 Ant. Jud. l. xvii. c. 2. Mat. xxii. 15 - 22). Add to
 this that the Jews entertained hopes of a temporal king-
 dom of the Messiah, which was to deliver them from
 the dominion of the Romans, and which they expected
 about this very time; (Josephus de B. I. vii. 13. Sue-
 tonius in Vesp. c. 4. Tacitus hist. ii. 5). Hence even
 those Jews, who did not acknowledge Jesus to be the
 Messiah, were yet incited by this hope to tumult and
 insurrection. There had been disturbances of this kind
 even among the Jews at Rome, which occasioned their
 banishment from thence. They are mentioned inciden-
 tally, Acts xviii. 2. Suetonius says on that subject,
 in

in the life of Claudius, cap. 25. "Judæos, impulsore Chresto, assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit." I agree with those who think Chrestus stands here for Christus, and that Suetonius only adopted a false derivation of the word, imagining it to be *χρηστικός* in the Greek. But I am not of opinion that Suetonius is speaking of Christians, and accuses them of sedition. They did not resist the Roman Magistrate, nor expect the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, and were besides at that time, about the year of Christ fifty-two or fifty-three, so feeble at Rome that they could not set on foot any tumults. I apprehend Judæi means real Jews. These raised more than one of those violent commotions at Rome, which in Latin were called Tumultus, a word which signifies something more than bellum, and expresses a war in the neighbourhood of Rome. See Gesner's Thesaurus. They did this in hopes that Christ would soon come and deliver them from the Romans; and they boasted of this expectation. The Emperor and his ministers interpreted this, as if Christ were a certain person, resident elsewhere, who spirited up the Jews to insurrection. This is what Suetonius means by Chresto impulsore tumultuari. But this exile lasted not long. It either terminated with the life of Claudius, or it was revoked by him; which accounts for our finding, about the time when this epistle was written, the Jew Aquila residing at Rome, who must have retired from thence before. We see the necessity of the exhortations contained in the thirteenth chapter of this epistle.

Whoever is conversant in the Roman history, will be able to illustrate many singular expressions in this chapter.

The city of Rome was the seat of tumults and civil wars, and was involved in troubles, even when the provinces were at peace. The Senate was secretly jealous of the Emperor, and the Emperor suspected the Senate. The Emperor was perpetually exposed to con-

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spiracies

spiracies. Caligula died a violent death ; Claudius was poisoned, and Nero, who was then on the throne, ended his days as unnaturally as they. The inferior magistrates aspired to the Empire. The imperial life-guard, who being foreigners, and chiefly Germans, had no share in the prosperity of the commonwealth, were, after the reign of Claudius, bought by the Emperors with money, and were odious to the citizens. And in fact the Emperors had no better right to their sovereignty over the Romans than that which they derived from the sword, or from the depth of their cunning.

These circumstances explain a twofold doctrine of St Paul, of which the commentators generally mistake the true sense. He exhorts the faithful to obey ἐξουσίαις ὑποτάσσουσις, i. e. the supreme magistrates, or, as the Syriac very well renders it מלכותי דרבמות magistatibus, qui majestatem habent. He means, that they ought not to be instigated by the inferior magistrates, or even by the Senate, to resist the Emperor. In the next place he tells them, that αἱ οὐραὶ ἐξουσιῶν, the rulers de facto, were ordained by God. This is a caution to them not to engage in the discussion of the Emperor's rights, but to obey him who actually filled the throne, as being providentially placed upon it ; to support this Sovereign de facto, and not to middle with them that are given to change, or who, as the Romans expressed it, Res novas moliantur.

SECTION CXXXII.

The contents of the Epistle to the Romans.

THE contents of the Epistle to the Romans are briefly these ;

1). Chap. i. 1—7. begins with the useful salutation with which the Greeks begun their letters. St Paul takes

takes that occasion to describe his apostolical office more at large, because the divine authority of this epistle depended upon it.

2.) Chap. i. 8—16. Here the apostle endeavours to pave the way for the subject he is about to discuss. He professes his joy at the flourishing state of the church at Rome, and his desire to come to Rome, and preach the gospel, of which he was not ashamed, in the face of the world. After this he insensibly introduces the capital point he intended to prove, namely,

3.) The subject of the gospel, ver. 16, 17. that it reveals a righteousness unknown before, which is derived solely from the faith, and to which Jews and Gentiles have an equal claim.

4.) In order to prove this point, he shews, chap. i. 18—iii. 20. that both Jews and Gentiles are under sin, i. e. that God will impute their sins to Jews as well as Gentiles. For it is not to be imagined that St Paul meant by this chain of conclusions, to prove what every man's experience will suggest to him, that Jews and Gentiles have sinned; but he means to prove against the Jews, that God will also impute sin to them, and that consequently they stood in need of a justification by faith.

His arguments may be fitly reduced to these syllogisms;

“ The wrath of God is revealed against those who hold the truth in unrighteousness ; i. e. who acknowledge the truth, and yet sin against it.

“ The Gentiles acknowledged truths, but partly by their idolatry, and partly by their other detestable vices, they sinned against the truths which they acknowledged.

“ Therefore the wrath of God is revealed against the Gentiles, and punisheth them.

“ THE

“ The Jews have acknowledged more truths than the Gentiles, and yet they sin ; chap. ii. 1, 17—24.

“ Consequently the Jewish sinners are yet more exposed to the wrath of God ; chap. ii. 1—12.”

Having thus proved his point, he answers certain objections to it.

Obj. 1. “ The Jews were well-grounded in their knowledge, and studied the law.” He answers, if the knowledge of the law, without the observation of it could justify them, then God could not have condemned the Gentiles, who knew the law by nature ; chap. ii. 13—16.

Obj. 2. “ The Jews were circumcised.” Ans. That is, ye are admitted by an outward sign into the covenant with God. This sign will not avail you when ye violate the covenant with God ; chap. ii. 25—29.

Obj. 3. “ According to this doctrine of St Paul, the Jews have no advantage before others, which is manifestly false.” Ans. Yes they have still advantages ; for unto them were committed the oracles of God. But their privileges do not extend to this, that God should overlook their sins, which, on the contrary, scripture earnestly condemns even in Jews ; chap. iii. 1—19.

Obj. 4. “ They had the Levitical law, and sacrifices.” Ans. From hence is no remission, but only the knowledge of sin ; chap. iii. 20.

5.) From all this St Paul concludes, that Jews and Gentiles must be justified by the same means, namely, without the Levitical law, through faith in Christ ; and in opposition to the imaginary advantages of the Jews, he states the declaration of Zachariah, that God is the God, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also ; chap. iii. 21—31.

6.) As the whole blessing was promised to those who were the faithful descendents of Abraham, whom both scripture and the Jews call his children, he proves his former

former assertion from the example of Abraham; who was an idolater before his call, but was declared just by God, on account of his faith, long before his circumcision. He takes occasion from hence to explain the nature and the fruits of faith; chap. iv. 1—v. 11.

7.) He goes on to prove from the justice of God, that the Jews had no advantage before the Gentiles, with respect to justification. Both Jews and Gentiles had forfeited life and immortality, by the means of one common father of their race, whom they themselves had not chosen. Now as God was willing to restore immortality by a new spiritual head of a covenant, which was Christ, it was equitable that both Jews and Gentiles should share in this new representative of the whole race; chap. v. 12—21. The fifteenth and sixteenth verses amount to this negative question, “Is it not fitting that the free gift should extend as far as the offence?”

8.) He shews that the doctrine of justification, as stated by him, lays us under the strongest obligations of holiness; chap. vi. 1—23.

9.) He shews that the law of Moses no longer concerns us at all; for our justification arises from our appearing in the sight of God, as if we were actually dead with Christ, on account of our sins; but the law of Moses was not given to the dead. On this occasion he evinces at large, that the eternal power of God over us is not affected by this, and that whilst we are under the law of Moses we perpetually become subject to death, even by sins of inadvertency, chap. vii. 1—25.

10.) He concludes from hence, that all those, and those only, who are united with Christ, and for the sake of this union, do not live according to the flesh, are free from all condemnation of the law, and have an undoubted share in eternal life; chap. viii. 1—17.

11.) Having described their blessedness, he is aware, that the Jews, who expected a temporal happiness,

would object to him, that Christians notwithstanding endure much suffering in this world. He answers this objection, chap. viii. 18—39.

12.) He shews that God is not the less true and faithful because he doth not justify, but rather rejects and punishes, those Jews who would not believe in the Messiah; chap. ix. x. xi. In his discussion of this point we may observe the cautious manner in which he introduces it, chap. ix. 1—5. as well as the discussion itself.

He shews that the promises of God were never made to all the posterity of Abraham; and that God always reserved to himself the power of choosing those sons of Abraham, whom for Abraham's sake he intended to bless, and of punishing the wicked sons of Abraham; and that with respect to temporal happiness or misery, he was not even determined in his choice by their works. Thus he rejected Ishmael, Esau, the Israelites in the desert in the time of Moses, and the greater part of that people in the time of Isaiah; and made them a sacrifice to his justice; chap. ix. 6—29.

He then proceeds to shew that God had reason to reject most of the Jews then living, because they would not believe in the Messiah, though the gospel had been preached to them plainly enough; chap. ix. 30—x. 21. However, that God had not rejected all his people, but was still fulfilling his promises upon many thousand natural descendants of Abraham, who believed in the Messiah; and would in a future period fulfil them upon more; for that all Israel would be converted; chap. xi. 1—32. And he concludes with an admiration of the wise counsels of God, ver. 33—36.

13.) From the doctrine hitherto laid down, and particularly from this, that God has in mercy accepted the Gentiles, he argues, that the Romans should consecrate and offer themselves up wholly to God. This leads him

to mention in particular some Christian duties, chap. xii.

14. He exhorts them to be subject to magistrates; chap. xii. 1---7. and

15.) To love one another heartily; ver. 8---10. and

16.) To abstain from those vices which were considered as things indifferent among the Gentiles; ver. 11---14.

17.) He exhorts the Jews and Gentiles in the Christian church to brotherly unity; chap. xiv. 1---xv. 13.

18.) He concludes his epistle with an excuse for having ventured to admonish the Romans, whom he had not converted, with an account of his journey to Jerusalem, and with some salutations to those persons whom he meant to recommend to the church; chap. xv. 14---xvi. 27. With respect to this last, there remains one observation.

When St Paul desires a church to salute certain individual members in his name, he thereby insinuates that he esteems these persons as his particular friends, and recommends them to the church. This is not so clear in any epistle as in that to the Romans; for he not only bestows a particular encomium upon most of those whom he salutes, but in the midst of his greetings he warns the Romans against those, against whom they were to be upon their guard; chap. xvi. 17---20. We may judge from hence, that salutations of this kind were not unworthy of a divine inspiration, or of the direction of the Holy Spirit.

SECTION CXXXIII.

Some of the best Commentators upon this Epistle.

BESIDES Mr Locke, the two following books contain the most useful helps towards illustrating this important epistle; de Braise's Latin paraphrase, published in the year 1670, and Turretine's prælectiones in xi capita epistolæ

epistolæ ad Romanos. Gen. 1741. Turretin follows Locke closely, and in the first chapters he is diffusive, and reasons well, which is necessary in a commentator upon this epistle. He endeavours also to maintain the universal grace of God against the rigid Calvinists, and to controvert absolute reprobation. But it is pity that he sometimes defends this truth with insufficient weapons, and has not hit upon the true sense of those chapters which have so long been matter of controversy among Protestants. I am sorry I cannot name any commentator who has done full justice to this important epistle. Mr Locke is undoubtedly the best; but as he was prejudiced against the doctrine of the atonement, which is the principal subject of the epistle, he unavoidably committed many mistakes.

SECTION CXXXIV.

The Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, were written during the first imprisonment of St Paul at Rome, and dispatched at the same time.

AFTER St Paul had written his epistle to the Romans, he went to Jerusalem, where he was apprehended by the Jews, and with difficulty rescued by the Romans. He was carried as a prisoner to Rome, where he arrived in the spring of the year 61. From this confinement, which was not very close, he wrote the epistles to Philemon, to the Colossians, the Ephesians, and the Philippians, much about the same time. It is necessary to prove this circumstance of the time.

It is plain from Col. iv. 9. that the epistles to Philemon, and to the Colossians, were dispatched much about the same time. Onesimus, a servant of Philemon's, who had deserted from his master, and was converted by St Paul in prison, was sent back to Philemon with an epistle.

Now

Now St Paul's words in Col. iv. 9. "Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you, shall make known unto you all things which are done here," evidence that the epistle to the Colossians was written about the same time. And the epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians are so perfectly alike, both in expression and sentiment, that they appear to have been written at the same time, when the language made use of in one of the epistles was still fresh in the Apostle's memory at writing the other. The circumstances too of both epistles correspond exactly. He writes both as a prisoner. I need not prove this of the epistle to the Colossians, because it was written at the time when St Paul had begotten Onesimus in his bonds, Philemon 10, 13. and it is certain with respect to the epistle to the Ephesians, from Eph. iii. 1. iv. 1. and vi. 20. The bearer of both epistles was Tychicus, Eph. vi. 21. Col. iv. 7. Colosse being an inland town, Tychicus, to whom it was convenient to travel part of the way by sea, probably landed at Ephesus; and we may therefore conclude from the epistle to the Colossians, that Tychicus travelled along with Onesimus through Ephesus.

I am sensible that many are of a different opinion, but hope their principal doubts are obviated by what I have observed concerning Tychicus's journey. See the Prolegomena to the epistle to the Ephesians, in *Wolſi Curæ philol. &c.* where are recited the different opinions of others, and the grounds upon which they are built.

St Paul was twice a prisoner at Rome. The first time he recovered his liberty, of which some mention is made by St Luke at the end of the Acts; but the second time he sealed the truth with his blood. These epistles were doubtless written in his first imprisonment; for in the second epistle, which was written when he sent Tychicus from his second imprisonment, likewise to Timothy at Ephesus, 2 Tim. iv. 12. he had no hopes of a release,
2 Tim.

2 Tim. iv. 6. 7, 18. whereas at the time when Tychicus delivered these epistles, he trusted he should speedily be set at liberty; Philem. 22. So that he sent Tychicus from Rome to Ephesus, both the first and second time of his imprisonment, and he carried these epistles the first time.

SECTION CXXXV.

Of Philemon, Archippus, and Onesimus.

PHILEMON seems to have been a substantial man at Colosse, who had a spacious house, in which a part of the Christian church assembled, and which travelling Christians were entertained; ver. 22. It is well known that the want of public inns among the ancients was the occasion of introducing the laws of hospitality, and that Christ and his Apostles enjoined Christians to receive each other hospitably. But as every individual was not in condition to entertain Christian strangers, the churches seem to have appointed one or more of their principal members for this purpose; Rom. xvi. 22. In this as in other respects they followed the custom of the eastern countries; for it is to this day, in the villages or towns of Arabia and Palestine, which are inhabited by Arabs, the duty of the judge to entertain travellers for one night. See M. D'Arveux's travels through Palestine. This was among Christians the office of deacons. So that Philemon had an office in the Church, and was a deacon; whence St Paul calls him his fellow-labourer. Hoffman indeed concludes from this title, in his introd. ad lect. ep. ad Coloss. that Philemon was bishop of Colosse, as is pretended by some ancients, and particularly in the Apostolical Constitutions. But he might be called a fellow labourer of St Paul, though he was no more than a deacon; and as it was usual among the fathers to invent

invent the first bishops of the Churches, their testimony is of less weight in this case than it might else have been. Philemon seems to have been one of the first fruits of the church of Ephesus, and not to have been converted like the rest by Epaphras, but by St Paul himself; ver. 19. It is probable, that he came to Ephesus when St Paul was there. His son Archippus, to whom this epistle, which was of the familiar kind, was likewise addressed, had just before been deacon in the church of Colosse; Col. iv. 17. Jerom exalts him too high in making him a bishop of that church. St Paul mentions him with honour, and not only styles him a fellow labourer, like Philemon, but also his fellow soldier.

What became of Onesimus is not known. The writers who report any thing of him, are mentioned by Wolfius in his *Curæ* upon the tenth verse of this epistle.

SECTION CXXXVI.

The situation of Colosse, and the circumstances of that Church.

HOFFMAN treats at large of the situation of Colosse, in his introd. in lection. ep. ad Coloss. and corrects an error committed by Celiarius, but most of the circumstances he mentions of the situation of the place are already known, and contribute no more to the exposition of this epistle than it would to alledge, from Cellarius, that Colosse was situate in Phrygia, upon the river Lycus.

The name of it was properly Colassæ, for thus it is called by the old geographers, and in the Syriac version, and in the most ancient manuscripts of the New Testament. The mistake of writing it Colossæ, which crept into the printed editions of the New Testament, might arise originally

originally from hence, that some who are taken notice of even by Erasmus, looked for this city in the isle of Rhodes, and derived the name from the celebrated Colossus.

St Paul himself had not been at this city when he wrote the Epistle to the Colossians; Col. ii. 1. though he had some years before travelled through Phrygia. However, Epaphras had founded a Christian church at Colosse, and probably in the neighbouring cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis; Col. i. 7. iv. 12-13. which Epaphras is by mistake confounded with Epaproditus, who was a deputy from the church of Philippi. It is probable that some Colossians, who had heard St Paul preach at Ephesus, Acts xix. 10. might be converted by him; and among these I reckon Philemon.

But the churches of Colosse, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, were in double danger of being seduced by false teachers, as they had not received the gospel immediately from an Apostle, but from Epaphras, and as they might question whether Epaphras did not err in some respects. This occasioned St Paul's anxiety for them, Col. ii. 1. and induced him to confirm the doctrine of Epaphras by an epistle; Col. i. 7. iv. 12, 13. We have seen above who those false teachers were that attempted to introduce confusion into this church, when we reviewed the errors of the Essenes. Some maintained that this epistle was written against the Gnostics; but this is a mere dispute about words. If the word Gnostics be taken in the same sense in which it was understood by the fathers, of a sect, who with excessive vehemence rejected the law of Moses, and permitted the eating of idol-offerings, as well as fornication, it is manifest that the heretics against whom St Paul here writes, were extravagantly opposite to the Gnostics. But if the Gnostics were heretics, who professed the *gnosis* or Eastern philosophy, then the Essenes themselves are Gnostics.

S E C T.

SECTION CXXXVII.

The Epistle from the Laodiceans to St Paul.

THE more immediate occasion of the epistle to the Colossians, was one from the Laodiceans to St Paul. The two cities, Laodicea and Hierapolis, were situate near Colossæ, and it appears from Col. ii. 2. iv. 13—16. that these three churches were closely connected together, and that they were all three the objects of the epistle to the Colossians.

From Col. iv. 16. we may conclude that the Laodiceans wrote an epistle to St Paul, which he calls *ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἀπὸ τῶν Λαοδικεαίων*. The epistle from Laodicea. Many have misunderstood these words, of an epistle to the Laodiceans, and the ancients have been led by this mistake, into the invention of a short epistle to the Laodiceans, which we find in the old German translation of the Bible, in the year 1467. The whole epistle is preserved in Greek, in Fabricii cod. Apocr. Nov. Testam. It is a mere rhapsody, collected from St Paul's other epistles; and contains nothing particularly necessary for the Colossians to know. Many moderns, who have easily discerned that this epistle is not genuine, are of opinion that the epistle to the Ephesians is properly addressed to the Laodiceans; and they plead the authority of Marcion, the ancient heretic. See the Epiphanius hæres. 42. and Tertulian. l. v. adv. Marcionem. But they are mistaken in appealing to this heretic; for according to Epiphanius, the epistle to the Ephesians was the seventh, and that to the Laodiceans the eleventh in Marcion's Apostolicon; consequently Marcion treated them as distinct epistles. See Hody de bibliorum textibus orig. et version, p. 664. But besides the conjecture of St Paul's having written an epistle to the Laodiceans is contrary to grammar, for he speaks not of an epistle to them, but from Laodicea. Others imagine, that he means an epistle which he wrote

from Laodicea. But St Paul had never been there when he wrote to the Colossians ; Col. ii. 1. and it was not the custom of the ancients to signify in their letters the name of the place where they were written ; and hence none of the epistles could be distinguished by the name of the place where they were dated. The Laodiceans, on the contrary, seem to have laid before St Paul some written queries in their epistle, relative to the new doctrines of the Essenes, to which he returns an answer in the epistle before us. For this reason the epistle was to be sent to Laodicea by the Colossians ; and they were to desire a copy of that from the Laodiceans, that they might be enabled the better to judge who were the deceivers, and what the errors which he aimed at.

SECTION CXXXVIII.

Of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

MANY commentators have fancied they discovered something in the epistle to the Ephesians which St Paul could not write to that church, whilst he was in prison at Rome. Hence some ancient copyists have omitted the words *to Ephesians*, Eph. i. 1. See the beginning of Jerom's exposition of this epistle, and Basil adv. Eun. l. 2. who according to some, writes that *τα παλαια των αντιγραφων*, the most ancient copies had not these words. See Whitby's Exam. Milii, p. 35. concerning the meaning of Basil's words ; and Bengelius, p. 690, 691. concerning the omission of them.

Hence some have been of opinion, that this was the epistle to the Laodiceans which the Ephesians arrogated to themselves, because St Paul had imparted to them a copy of it. But as we have shewn that no epistle was written to the Laodiceans, this conjecture falls to the ground ; and Pierce justly observes, that St Paul would

not have saluted the Laodiceans by the Colossians, if he had sent them an epistle about the same time. Dr Milne is of opinion that he meant hereby to make them amends for having concluded his epistle, not in the usual form, "Grace be with you," but with these words, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." But as this was, with respect at least to all good members of that church, manifestly equivalent to Grace be with you, there was no occasion for making them reparation, and the church, which received this epistle, might discern from all the contents of it, that they were tenderly beloved by St Paul.

Others consider this as a general epistle, not written to any particular church. They pretend that St Paul wrote *Τοις αγιοις τοις εναντιον και πιστοις εν Χριστω Ιησου*, as St Basil quotes the words, that the reader at each place might in reading insert the name of the church where he resided. I am not inclined to deny that this epistle was to be communicated to some neighbouring churches, which were daughters of the church at Ephesus, and were as closely connected with her as the churches of Colossæ, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, were with each other. Thus the epistles to the Corinthians concerned all the churches in Achaia; and an epistle to the Ephesians might be considered as an epistle to all the churches in Asia Proconsularis. But to pretend against all antiquity, that this epistle was not directed to any particular church, is to violate the laws of historical probability.

The arguments alledged to prove that this epistle could not be written to the Ephesians, are these;

1. That St Paul takes no notice of certain particular circumstances of the church of Ephesus; he sends no salutations, and makes no mention of his former long residence at Ephesus, as was his custom when he wrote to churches with whom he had resided for any time.

Perhaps this might be occasioned by his design of having the epistle communicated to the other churches in Asia. But it appears from what hath been mentioned above of the state of the church of Ephesus, that the contents of this epistle were perfectly well suited to the circumstances of that church. We find in the epistles to Timothy, that the most pernicious snares at Ephesus were the errors of the *Ellices*, and the denial of the resurrection of the dead; and St Paul combats these throughout this epistle.

2. It is objected that Timothy was with St Paul about the time when he wrote this epistle, and dispatched it along with that to the Colossians, by the hands of Tychicus; Col. i. 1. Now as Timothy had ordained the elders and ministers of the church at Ephesus, St Paul would either have joined Timothy's name with his own, chap. i. 1. or at least have sent a salutation from him; neither of which having been done, the epistle could not be written to the Ephesians.

I confess this to be the weightiest objection. But possibly the epistle might be written some days before the other, and Timothy might have been already dispatched, when St Paul wrote his epistle to the Ephesians. Or perhaps the reason of not mentioning Timothy was, that the epistle was intended for the use of the other churches in Asia, who might not all be acquainted with Timothy.

Thus much appears from every circumstance, that the epistle to the Ephesians at the same time affected the neighbouring daughters of that church; and on this account St Paul seems not to express so plainly the names of the heresies he meant to confute in this epistle, as in that which he wrote to the Colossians. And upon these grounds some have imagined that this epistle was written much earlier than is commonly thought; but Wolfius answers that opinion in his *Prolegomena* to this epistle.

S E C T.

SECTION CXXXIX.

Of the peculiar Vices of the Ephesians.

THE city of Ephesus was distinguished from other cities by peculiar vices and sins, the knowledge of which is necessary towards understanding the epistle to the Ephesians.

1. Ephesus was the genuine seat of the idolatrous worship of Diana. St Paul frequently alludes to this in the epistles to Timothy, where he calls the true God $\Sigma\Omega\Theta\eta\varsigma$, in opposition to Diana, who was called $\Sigma\Omega\text{-}\tau\epsilon\iota\mu\alpha$.

2. The Ephesians were remarkable for the practice of superstitious arts, insomuch that Ephesian books was an expression equivalent to magic books. See Acts xix. 18, 19. This probably might facilitate the establishment of the Essenes in this city, for they practised various arts of that kind. And it is observable, that according to the testimony of Clemens Alexandrinus, these superstitious arts were imported to Ephesus, by the Egyptian priests of Cybele; and that the Pythagoreans, who embraced the Egyptian philosophy, as the Essenes did, excused these Ephesian follies, and explain them as emblematical. See Clem. Alex. Strom. l. v. p. 568.

3. The Ephesians were remarkably vain of a sumptuous excess in their dress. See 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10.

4. Lewdness and drunkenness are in some degree the vices of all countries, but they were particularly in vogue at Ephesus, and the Romans themselves considered these vices as the fruits of their conquests in Asia. Other nations were dissolute in their actions rather than in their words; but the Ephesians were distinguished by, and gloried in obscenity of language; which accounts for the contents of Eph. v.

SECTION CXL.

Of the State of the city and church of Philippi.

ST PAUL on his journey, of which we had an account above, sect. 110. founded the church at Philippi, to which the next epistle is directed. We have an account of it in Acts xvi. 12---40. Philippi was a city of no great extent in Macedonia, near the borders of Thrace. It had formerly been called Crenides, but the famous King Philip had given it his own name, when he enlarged and fortified it against the Thracians. That a Roman colony had been carried thither by Julius Cæsar, appears from Vaillant Num. æn. imp. T. 1. p. 160. and from Spon's Mif. p. 173. See also the writers quoted by Wolf in his Curæ upon Acts xvi. 12. and Pliny l. iv. 11. A doubt has been raised by St Luke's calling it *πρῶτη τῆς μερίδος τῆς Μακεδονίας πόλις*, the first city of that part of Macedonia. Paulus Æmilius had divided Macedon into four parts. The part in which Philippi was situate was called *πρῶτη*, the first Macedon, but Philippi appears by no means to have been the first city in this part. For if by the description be meant the first frontier town towards Thrace, it belongs to Neapolis, Acts xvi. 11. If it means the capital, Amphipolis seems to have the best claim to that title. For we read in Livy, B. xlv. 29, "*capita regionum ubi consilia fierent, primæ regionis Amphipolin.*" So that either the disposition made by Paulus Æmilius was changed, and Philippi obtained the precedency before Amphipolis, upon its becoming a Roman colony; or St Luke meant, not the capital, but the most considerable and best inhabited city. Pierce chooses to alter the reading of Acts xvi. 12, thus; *ἡτῆς ἐστὶ πρῶτης μερίδος τῆς Μακεδονίας πόλις.*

It appears from the epistle, that the most dangerous seducers, against whom it was necessary to warn the Philippians, were the pharisaical Jews or zealots for the law of Moses; and that the church of Philippi sent to St Paul a regular stipend, or an annual stated present; Phil. i. 5. 15-17. This annual present had been sent to the Apostle by the hands of Epaphroditus, as deputy from the Philippians, who at the same time assisted him in propagating the gospel in Italy, St Paul being himself in prison at Rome. This work had brought upon him so severe a sickness, that he was nigh unto death; Phil. ii. 25. Baronius in his first book de testimonio Christi apud Josephum, part. iii. sect. viii. represents this Epaphroditus as a person of great distinction, imagining him to be the same Epaphroditus who was a freed man of Nero's, and encouraged Josephus to write his book of Jewish antiquities. But if we consider, that two persons might easily be of the same name in the Roman empire, this whole pretence will sink into the lowest degree of probability, a bare possibility.

We find likewise mention made in this epistle of bishops and ministers of the church. The two divided deaconesses, Evodius and Syntyche, seem to be of the number of the latter, chap. i. 1. iv. 2, 3.

SECTION CXLI.

St Paul wrote to the Philippians from his first imprisonment at Rome.

ST PAUL wrote his Epistle to the Philippians from his first imprisonment at Rome, as appears from the mention of his bonds, chap. i. 13. and from the salutation he sends from those of Cæsar's household; iv. 22. M. Oder attempted indeed to maintain a contrary opinion, in a Programma he published in 1731, but he is sufficiently

sufficiently answered by Wolfius in his *Curæ philol. &c.* I grant that in chap. i. 5, 6. is meant the contribution of the Philippians towards the propagation of the gospel; but cannot admit the conclusion, that therefore this epistle was written soon after their conversion. He might mean a benefaction of theirs of some years standing; and it appears plainly, from chap. iv. 10. that the stipend, which they promised St Paul, was in arrear when Epaphroditus brought it to him.

The more immediate occasion of this epistle was, the return of Epaphroditus, by whom St Paul sent it, as a grateful acknowledgement of the money he had received; and at the same time gave them an account of his imprisonment, and warned them against the seductions of the Jews.

SECTION CXLII.

The Epistle to the Hebrews.

I HAVE not much to offer upon the Epistle to the Hebrews, but refer my reader to Pierce. St Paul was the author of this epistle, and wrote it towards the end of his first imprisonment at Rome, in the Hebrew tongue, to the Christians in Palestine; a severe persecution having not only deprived them of the apostle St James, but having rendered almost the whole church wavering in the faith. See Harenberg de Hebræis, ad quos Paulus eam quæ in Nov. Test. exstet, epistolam dedit. It may be found in the *Miscell. Nov. Lipsiæ*, vol. iv. p. i. p. 1—36.

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SECTION CXLIIL.

The Epistle to Titus.

ST PAUL'S Epistle to Titus might as well be inscribed his Epistle to the Cretans: For his design in sending this epistle was not so much to instruct Titus, in matters with which he must have been acquainted before, as to put into his hands a rule, which he might lay before the Cretans, and to which he might appeal whenever unworthy and unqualified persons attempted to intrude into the Episcopal office. The contents of this epistle being much the same with the contents of the first to Timothy, I need not treat of them here. The churches in Crete had hitherto not had any bishops and ministers. Titus was to appoint them, but was to be upon his guard against some of the circumcision, who aspired to ecclesiastical offices. As we have an account of the life of Titus in ecclesiastical history, I shall only give a short account of the Cretan churches, and of the time when this epistle was written.

The famous and once so populous and powerful island of Crete, which in Hebrew was called **קִרְיָא**, Amos ix. 7. was formerly peopled by the Egyptians, Gen. x. 14. and the Philistines, with whom the Israelites waged so many wars, had gone over into Palestine from this island, between the times of Jacob and Moses, whence they are called **קִרְיָא** in Zeph. ii. 5. See Calmer's dissertation of the origin and gods of the Philistines. It would not be pertinent to enlarge upon this here, else I could derive from it some light upon the Jewish history.

Crete may justly be called the parent of Grecian and Roman idolatry and Mythology; and the Cretans so far excelled other nations in the invention of gods, that
they

they obtained the appellation of the Liars. Unnatural vices; and a spirit of sedition, were two other characteristics of theirs. Those Cretans who were converted to Christianity, were indeed obliged to forsake idolatry and the worship of images; but as the Cretans were Egyptians by descent, and had long since intermixed the whims of Egyptian philosophy with Judaism, and embraced Christianity very early; no church was in greater danger of adopting the absurd and heathen genealogies of God, of his only begotten son, and of the Æones. Hence St Paul warns against these things, Tit. i. 14. iii. 9.

We cannot determine with certainty at what time a Christian church was first planted in Crete. Some Cretans were present at the first effusion of the Holy Ghost; Acts ii. 11. and its probable that these brought the Christian religion along with them into Crete. St Paul spent some time in that island, on his journey to Rome, Acts xxvii. 8. and probably neglected not to sow the good seed of the gospel. It is certain however that he was in Crete again, after having recovered his liberty. For when he wrote this epistle he had lately left Crete, chap. i. 5. and was not at Rome, but at Nicopolis, chap. iii. 12. not that Nicopolis in Macedonia, which was built by Trajan, but a city of the same name in Epirus. See Milne's observations upon the subscription to this epistle. So that the epistle to Titus was written after St Paul's imprisonment at Rome; but the real year cannot be precisely determined.

SECTION CXLIV.

The second Epistle to Timothy.

THE second epistle of Paul to Timothy was written during his last imprisonment at Rome, not very long before

before he sealed the truth with his blood. The year of this imprisonment is not very certain, nor do we know more of the issue of it, than that the Apostle was forced to lay down his life. It appears from the epistle itself, that he was chiefly accused by Alexander the copper-smith, a learned Jew of Ephesus; that some Asiatic Christians disavowed him through fear, and that those of distinction at court, who might have protected, deserted him. It seems to have been at first the design to throw him to the lions, in the approaching winter diversions; but he pleaded his cause so well, that no judgment was given, the matter being put off till the diversions were over. In the mean time he expected nothing less than death; and hence it is clear that this epistle must have been written in his second, not in his first, imprisonment at Rome.

It is not easy to conjecture what was the charge against him; but most probably his doctrine concerning Christ was interpreted as instigating both Jews and Gentiles to rebellion against the emperor; which was an accusation the more easily credited at Rome, as the Jews were about that time ripe for an insurrection.

That Timothy was at Ephesus, or in the Lesser Asia, when this epistle was sent to him, may be justly concluded from the frequent mention of persons residing at Ephesus. See Benson's Prolegomena to this epistle. The false teachers who had before thrown this church into confusion, grew every day worse; insomuch that Hymenæus and Philetus, two Ephesian heretics, now denied the resurrection of the dead; into which error they were led, as we are told by St Paul, through a dispute about words. For at first they only annexed various improper significations to the word resurrection, but at last they denied the real signification, and pretended, that the resurrection of the dead was only a resurrection from the death of sin, and so was already past. The best account of
these.

these false teachers is given by Clausewitz in his *Programma de iis, qui tempore apostolorum resurrectionem carnis negarunt*. He shews that Hymenæus and Philetus did not so much deny the immortality of the soul, as the resurrection of the body, and derived their error, not from the Saducees, but from the eastern philosophy. And it might naturally proceed from hence, as that philosophy placed the origin of sin in the body. I only differ from him in this, that he considers these two heretics as disciples of Simon the Magician, and as Gnostics in the strict sense of the word. It seems more probable to me, that this error among others might take its rise from the Essenes, who sowed so many tares at Ephesus. At least Josephus says expressly of the Essenes, l. ii. de B. J. c. 8. "They consider the body as mortal, and the soul as immortal; the latter ascends joyfully, when delivered from the prison of the body." However both amount to much the same upon the whole, for both the Gnostics and Essenes derived their principles from the eastern philosophy, and upon them built different conclusions.

The epistle consists chiefly of advice from St Paul to Timothy, thenceforward to be active in opposing these false teachers, and propagating the Gospel. As this epistle was written to the Apostle's most intimate friend, and was not intended for the use of others, it may serve to exhibit to us the temper and character of St Paul, and to convince us that he was no deceiver, but sincerely believed the doctrine he preached.

SECTION CXLV.

Whether St Paul was an Impostor, an Enthusiast, a Libertine, or a Messenger from Heaven.

As St Paul was not a disciple of Christ, during his ministry upon earth, and as many Jewish zealots and other heretics were offended at his doctrine, his right to the name and dignity of an Apostle of Christ was disputed, even in his life-time, by many, particularly in Galatia and at Corinth. And though he prevailed in those churches, yet some later heretics have refused to acknowledge him as a messenger from Christ. But his divine mission is sufficiently proved by his miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. I have not room to enlarge, as I could wish, upon this subject; but shall just take notice of the principal objections made in modern times to St Paul's divine mission. No enemy to religion would be so absurd as to represent St Paul as a wicked impostor; since it is hard to assign any selfish ends of his in the imposture. He subsisted by the labour of his own hands; he lost his credit among the Jews by preaching the gospel; he involved himself in trouble and disgrace, and was obliged at last to seal his doctrine with his blood. If besides we consider the undissembled calmness of mind conspicuous throughout the second epistle to Timothy, at a time when his death was impending, he cannot possibly pass for a wicked deceiver, who was disappointed of his hope. But most of the enemies to religion are sensible of this, and raise objections to him of a different kind.

Some pretend that he was an enthusiast, and a man of a wild imagination. They disculpate him from the charge of being a deceiver, but affirm that he was deceived, that he fancied he had been called by the voice

of Christ in a thunder, and had the gift of working miracles and imparting miraculous gifts. I will not return the usual answer, "That his former zeal for the law, and against Christ, rendered it impossible for him to persuade himself falsely, that Christ had appeared to him and called him to be an Apostle." For enthusiasts always run into extremes, and are very apt, in certain circumstances, to imagine things directly opposite to their former sentiments. But I would propose to these suspicious objectors, the following questions :

1.) If St Paul deceived himself, if all that we read in Acts ix. was a phantom of his restless mind, how came it to pass that his companions likewise saw and heard any part of what passed only in his own imagination ?

2.) How could St Paul imagine to the end of his days, that he wrought certain miracles which were never wrought ? Were not his senses evidences to him of the contrary ? How could he imagine that he had communicated the gift of tongues to some, if they did not speak languages with which they were unacquainted before ? Was he, were all the churches to which he wrote, were his fellow-labourers so totally deprived both of their sight and hearing, as to imagine these things ? The prophets of the Cevennes, in the present century, were the greatest enthusiasts in the world ; but they did not imagine the contrary of what they saw and heard ; and though they were sanguine in prophesying that they should raise the dead, yet they never ventured to make the experiment. But St Paul, it is pretended, persuaded himself for almost twenty successive years, that he was working the miracles which he did not work, and many thousands joined him in believing the contrary of what they saw. Is this possible ?

3.) What enthusiast or fanatic ever ventured upon morals, without being misled by his imagination to invent an extravagant system of morals ? Whereas in the morality

lity taught by St Paul, we meet with nothing but what is rational, and exactly consonant to philosophical ethics.

4. When a man of a frantic disordered head suffers the heat of his imagination to carry him so far as to seal his error by death, his resolution is observed to be accompanied with a wild irrational vehemence. Many things which we read of the joyfulness of the martyrs of the second and third century, and particularly the eagerness with which they plunged into sufferings, seems to approach nearly to this phrensy. But how calm and rational was St Paul's temper of mind, when he saw death impending? He went to meet death but did not seek it. He defended himself as well as he could, and felt the usual and natural apprehensions of a painful death.

See this matter more fully discussed in the excellent observations on the conversion and apostleship of St Paul, in a letter to Gilbert West, Esquire.

Morgan in his Moral Philosopher maintains the direct contrary of this charge. He treats St Paul as the greatest and wisest free-thinker of his time, who, by a well-intended fraud delivered the world, and the Jews in particular, from the yoke of superstition. The religion of Moses and of the other apostles was in his opinion erroneous. These all believed a temporal kingdom of the Messiah, and endeavoured to force the law of Moses upon the Gentiles; whereas St Paul was a free-thinker, who embraced pure natural religion; but foreseeing that he should not deliver the world from this superstition by mere conclusions of reason, he embraced to outward appearance, the tenets of the other Apostles, but extracted from them all the poison, by various allegorical interpretations, adapted to the then taste of the world. By this artifice he transformed the Messiah from a temporal

prince into a sacrifice for us, and converted the wonderful law of Moses into a mere type of Christ, and so declared it fulfilled and abolished.

Morgan was not the first inventor of this conceit. Erasmus in 1519, wrote thus to Luther; "Sic (civilis modestia) Paulus Judaicam legem abrogavit, omnia trahens ad allegoriam." However Erasmus had no such design as Morgan. As this last hath been sufficiently answered by Leland, Chapman, Chandler, and Lowman, and as the miracles of St Paul abundantly acquit him from the charge, and prove his divine mission, I need not enter into this controversy here, which in fact tends rather to vindicate or accuse Moses and the other Apostles than St Paul.

SECTION CXLVI.

Of the Catholic Epistles in general, and of some of them in particular.

WE come now to the Catholic epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude. They are probably so called, because most of them were written, not to individual churches, but to the faithful, dispersed throughout whole countries. The second and third epistle of St John are added to them only because they were written by the same hand which wrote the first, and would have been lost had they been copied separately. Among these epistles no more than two are of the class of the *ομολογούμενα*, or writings acknowledged by the whole church. These are the first of St Peter and of St John. Eusebius l. iii. hist. Eccl. c. 25. places the rest among the *ἀντιλεγόμενα*. However St James's epistle is received by most of the ancient churches, which rejected the other three; and the two last epistles of St John are easily known to be his by their stile. Nor can I conceive any end an impos-

tor

nor could have in forging these epistles. There remain then no more than two, the second of Peter and that of Jude. These are not supported by the unanimous testimony of the primitive church, and were not translated into Syriac at the same time with the epistle of St James, and the first of St Peter and St John. They cannot besides be distinguished by their stile to be the writings of Peter and Jude, for we have no writing extant of St Jude, and the second epistle of St Peter is said to be very different in stile from the first. There are moreover some particular exceptions made to them, "That the second epistle of St Peter endeavours to excuse the false doctrine of the day of judgment being then at hand, upon the non-appearance of that day being urged as an argument to render Christianity suspicious; and that he pretends it was owing to the long suffering of God, that the day of the Lord was delayed beyond the time at first intended; chap. iii. 9. 10. that he quotes some things from St Paul, which are not to be met with in his writings, without a forced construction; ver. 15, 16. and that St Jude's epistle contains some things which favour of Jewish fables; ver. 9, 10." Thus much is certain, that both epistles must stand and fall together. The contents of both are very much alike, for they prove against certain heretics, probably against the Gnostics, that a great day of judgment is impending; and they make use of the same kind of arguments and phrases. They conclude, from the judgments of God formerly exerted, that God will be an avenger of evil; which is doubtless an unexceptionable conclusion. But whether they were actually written by these Apostles, is a question of which the decision will demand a separate work, in which I propose to consider the *αποκαλυψαις*, or, these five epistles, and the Revelation of St John. The epistle of St James was written by the lesser James to the dispersed Jewish

converts to Christianity, and was intended, partly to exhort them to constancy in suffering, partly to warn them against certain Jewish vices.

SECTION CXLVII.

The first Epistle of St Peter was written to Gentile Proselytes, who continued uncircumcised, and were afterward converted to Christianity.

ALTHOUGH St Peter in the first verse of his first epistle plainly declares to whom this epistle was addressed, to the elect strangers, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, yet the commentators have been of very different opinions upon this subject, and the true one has been best stated and proved by Benson, in his History of St Peter, and of his writing the first epistle. He delivers six different opinions concerning these elect strangers:

1.) Some imagine that St Peter meant Christians in general. But though the epistle is written to Christians, some things in it could not be affirmed of all Christians; for instance, that they had walked in abominable idolatries.

2.) Others suppose them to be the remnant of the ten tribes, who had been carried away into captivity. This conjecture rests upon chap. ii. 10. where St Peter applies to his readers the words of Hosea concerning the ten tribes; but as St Peter only uses the same phrase, without intimating that Hosea's prophecy was fulfilled in them, this argument is not conclusive. Besides, the remnant of the ten tribes could not be found separate from the Jews any where but in Assyria and Media, or in Tartary; not in the Lesser Asia. Those of them who dwelt in this country, were reckoned among the Jews, and if St Peter had directed an epistle to them alone,

alone, he must have distinguished them from the other Jews by some plainer description than that of scattered strangers.

3.) Many apprehend them to be the Jewish converts, who were actually strangers in Asia Minor, and who were more nearly related to St Peter, as he was an apostle of the circumcision. And chap. i. 15. and ii. 12. seems particularly applicable to them. But this conjecture falls to the ground, if we consider that St Peter reminds his strangers of the former time of their ignorance, and their idolatry; chap. i. 14. iv. 3. which sin the Jews were at that time particularly careful in avoiding.

4.) Others again have been induced by these and other passages, in which St Peter describes his strangers just as St Paul did the Heathens, to believe that the epistle was written to converts among the Gentiles. But how could the apostle call such Christians by the name of strangers in Asia Minor? They were most of them natives of that country, and though they might be figuratively called strangers, as having no abiding place upon earth, yet that appellation would have a singular and forced, or mystical, appearance, in the inscription of an epistle.

5. Those therefore come nearer the truth, who suppose the epistle written to such Gentiles as had first been circumcised to the Jewish, and after embraced the Christian religion. But as Heathens might embrace the Jewish faith, without being circumcised, and we find no trace that these were circumcised; and as the design of St Peter's epistle is, to remove from them all doubt whether they were in the favour of God, which was not necessary to be done with respect to the circumcised in general; it is most probable,

6.) That

6.) That the epistle was addressed to such Gentiles as had first forsaken idolatry and believed in the true God, without circumcision, and afterward became Christians.

These are called גרים or strangers, by the Jews, in a more enlarged sense; and St Peter had particular reasons for espousing these people, the gospel having first been revealed to such Gentiles as had acknowledged the true God, without being circumcised; Acts x. Many passages are illustrated by supposing the epistle written to the Christians from among the proselytes; for instance, chap. i. 2. Elect (or declared to be such) through sanctification of the spirit, compared with Acts x. 44—47. xi. 15—17. and the frequent mention of regeneration.

The whole epistle becomes doubly useful by this observation; for if it was written to such Gentile converts as Cornelius, we shall clearly discern the falsehood of Morgan's pretence, and that St Peter taught and inculcated the same doctrine with St Paul; since the whole epistle abounds in assurances that they were regenerated and become children of God, without Levitical sacrifices, merely through Christ. We shall make use of this in section 149, to throw a light upon this epistle, which Benson gives but imperfectly, and the other commentators not at all.

SECTION CXLVIII.

The first epistle of St Peter was written at Jerusalem at the time of the first Council.

ST PETER sent this epistle to the proselytes in Asia, by Silvanus, the usual companion of St Paul; having written it in a city which he calls Babylon, and which the ancients unanimously suppose to be Rome. All who have hitherto treated of this Babylon commit some mistakes

takes, which leave it as doubtful as ever whether we are to give credit to the ancients, or with many Protestants to suppose some particular place of the name of Babylon. But Mosheim, in his excellent preface to Walther's exposition of this epistle, shews it to be somewhat probable that it was written at Rome.

“ The ancient and famous Babylon was not in being
 “ when St Peter wrote this epistle, as Pearson has
 “ shewn in his Oper. posthum. p. 49—54. so that Scaliger, Salmasius, and de Marca, are mistaken, in supposing this Babylon to be meant. Fabricius, du Pin, and Beaufobre, take it to have been Seleucia, and that this city inherited the name of Babylon; but M. Mosheim shews incontestably, that Seleucia never bore that name. If then it must be a Babylon, there was a place of the name in Egypt, which Spanheim proves to have been at that time a great and famous city. But as Papias, even in the second century, took this Babylon for Rome, and Eusebius shews, that it was a common appellation of that city in his time, it is the opinion of Mosheim, that in a matter of history we ought to follow the ancients. It is at least not impossible that St Peter might call Rome by the name of Babylon, as it was usually called by that name among the Jews.”

All this still leaves the matter in doubt, whether St Peter wrote this epistle at Babylon in Egypt or at Rome; and M. Mosheim acknowledges as much throughout that preface. If I could only find a single authority for calling Jerusalem by the name of Babylon, I would rather follow Cappellus and Harduin, who take Jerusalem to have been the place; which was also, according to Cyril of Alexandria, meant by Isaiah, when he is speaking of Babylon. For the contents of this epistle are not so well suited to any time as to that soon after the council of Jerusalem, whilst Peter continued in that city.

city. This is all, and rather more than Cappellus alledges for the conjecture. Harduin doth not prove it at all, but seems only to want an evidence of our unbelief, or of our credulity. It is not impossible, that St Peter might call Jerusalem by the name of Babylon, after she had begun to persecute the church, and the expression of the elected Church at Babylon seems to imply a paradox, which would have been removed had Jerusalem itself been named. It is therefore not improbable, that St Peter might in an epistle make use of this figurative and approbrious name to signify Jerusalem. If Silas and Silvanus be the same person, as is commonly believed, then this uncommon opinion will receive a further and very high degree of probability. For the answer of the council of Jerusalem, which discharged the Gentiles from the observation of the Levitical law, was brought to the faithful in Asia minor, by the hands of this very Silas; Acts xv. 22. 27. 32. who was appointed at Jerusalem to be the messenger to Paul and Barnabas; and the same Silas or Silvanus brought an epistle of Peter's of much the same import, to the churches in the northern part of Asia minor; 1 Peter v. 12. For St Peter mentions the main import of the epistle himself, that it was to testify that this was the true grace of God, wherein they stood; (i. e. the elect strangers, who were yet uncircumcised). Add to this that St Peter sends a salutation from Mark, chap. v. 23. and this Mark, who was also called John, was returned to Jerusalem, not long before the said council; Acts xiii. 13. All circumstances thus concurring, and it being never more necessary than at that time, for St Peter to testify to the Gentile converts, that they stood in the true grace of God, it appears to me, whilst I am writing, probable in the highest degree, that this epistle was written at Jerusalem soon after the council, i. e. in the year of Christ forty-nine. This then is the first apostolical epistle

tle we have, and perhaps the first book of the New Testament. I am the less influenced by the testimony of the ancients to the contrary, as the matter depends not upon the historical question, whether St Peter ever was at Rome, but upon the critical question, whether he calls Rome by the name of Babylon?

SECTION CXLIX.

The main design of St Peter in this epistle.

I HOPE the discovery of this single circumstance of time will contribute as much to the illustration of this epistle, as a comment of several folios, without it. St Peter's chief design is to confirm the doctrine of St Paul, which the false teachers pretended he was opposing; and to assure the profelytes, that they stood in the true grace of God; chap. v. 12. With this view he calls them Elect, and mentions, that they had been declared such by the effusion of the Holy Ghost upon them; chap. i. 1, 2. He assures them, that they were regenerate without circumcision, merely through the gospel and resurrection of Christ, ver. 3, 4, 21—25. and that their sufferings were no argument of their being under the displeasure of God, as the Jews imagined; ver. 6—12. he recommends them to hope for grace to the end; ver. 13. he testifies that they were not redeemed by the paschal lamb, but through Christ, whom God had fore-ordained for this purpose before the foundation of the world; ver. 18—20. I will not carry this farther here, it being my intention to publish an illustration of this, as well as of the lesser epistles of St Paul. I would only add this single observation, that the contents of this epistle annihilate the whole of Morgan's charge against St Peter, and against Christianity.

S E C T.

SECTION CL.

Of the first Epistle of St John.

THE learned vary about the design of the first epistle of St John. Mill thinks it was written against the Gnostics in general. Lampe imagines it was only intended in general to prescribe moral duties to the faithful. But it is evident, both from the testimony of the ancients, and from the contents of the epistle, that it was, strictly speaking, written against Cerinthus, as well as the gospel. Opertius shews this in his learned dissertation de scopo Epistolæ primæ Joannis. But though I apprehend Cerinthus to be the principal adversary whom St John is combating in this epistle, yet it appears to me probable, that he alludes to the more pernicious doctrines of the other Gnostics. At least the frequent admonitions, to walk in the light, and to keep undefiled from sensual sins, seem to be rather directed to the other Gnostics than to Cerinthus, of whom we do not know that he was loose in his morals; and the conclusion, "keep yourselves from Idols," could not be an admonition to the followers of Cerinthus, but might be to the wild Gnostics. For whilst the former taught that the law of Moses was abolished, they maintained, that eating things offered to idols, and fornication, were indifferent acts.

In opposition to these errors, St John lays down three positions;

1. That it is necessary to walk in the light, and to keep clear of the lusts of the flesh, in order to have a share in the kingdom of God.

2. That it is necessary to keep the new commandment of loving one another.

3. That

3. That Jesus was Christ and the Son of God, not only in his baptism, but also at the shedding of his blood.

He enters not into the proof of these points, but simply attests them, and thereby shews his dislike of the doctrines of Cerinthus and the Gnostics, which was sufficient toward the confutation of those errors, considering his authority as an Apostle of Christ.

Some place the time of writing this epistle in the years 91, 92, 98, or 99. But as hath been already observed by Grotius, it appears from chap. ii. 12. to have been certainly written before the destruction of Jerusalem. St John says emphatically, that "It is the last time or hour;" which words cannot be rationally interpreted without applying them to the last time of the Jewish state. Wolfius in his *Curæ* collects various other interpretations of this text, but they are none of them weighty when narrowly examined. For St John could not mean the end of the world, because that is not yet come to pass, and was then at the distance of more than 1600 years at least. Moir interprets it of the fourth monarchy, or Roman empire, in which the antichrist was to come. But it is probable, that St John had an eye to that prophecy of Daniel, and took his computation of time from thence. Is there a single clear and indisputable passage of the New Testament in which the Roman empire is called, The last time? Is it the language of good sense, to say, "The fourth monarchy is come, and we know it by the multitude of heretics in the church?" It was sufficiently known that the Roman empire, or Daniel's fourth monarchy, then existed. The interpretation would be somewhat specious, if St John had been speaking of such heretics, as were predecessors of the Pope of Rome; of the Essenes for instance, from whom the great apostacy was, according to St Paul, to take its rise, and who are still considered as saints by the church of Rome. But he speaks of heretics who are condemned

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by the person called the Roman antichrist, and whose doctrines are foreign to his. Woltius is of opinion, that $\sigma\chi\alpha\tau\eta\ \omega\pi\alpha$ is equivalent to the Hebrew אחרית הימים , The end of the days, which in scripture signifies the time of the New Testament. Now though some Jews apply this expression to the time of the Messiah, they interpret it falsely. It signifies no more than future times, and may be applied to any future period, as appears from Gen. xlix. 1. For the whole prophecy of that chapter was doubtless fulfilled in the Old Testament, and long before the coming of the Messiah.

It appears moreover, that the first epistle of St John was written before his gospel. Both relate to one species of heretics. The gospel confutes them by argument; the epistle only testifies, that St John rejected their opinions, which would have been superfluous had he written a confutation of them before hand.

There is still greater doubt about the persons to whom this epistle is addressed. The Latin version calls it the Epistle to the Parthians. Some fathers are of the same opinion, and Grotius follows them. Lightfoot advances a mere conjecture, that it was written to the Corinthians. Benson thinks it addressed to the Christians residing in Galilee just before the destruction of Jerusalem; but as idolatry was not prevalent in Galilee, the admonition of chap. v. 21. becomes in that case needless. Others more truly suppose it directed to all Christians, wheresoever dispersed. Lampe is of this opinion, and appeals to the authority of Theodoret. And as no mention is made of the circumstances of any particular church, this is most probable. But upon the whole, I see no reason for calling this an epistle of St John. It begins not with the salutation usual in Greek epistles, and with which St John himself begins his two last epistles. It conveys none of the salutations common to almost all the apostolical epistles; and concludes differently from the rest. In short, it appears to me to have nothing in common with

an epistle, except that it is written, and addresses Christians in the second person, which might be done in a book, and is frequently done by us in prefaces. I therefore consider it as a book in which St John meant to proclaim to all Christians his aversion to the doctrines of Cerinthus and of the Gnostics. If any contend for calling this an epistle, it will give me no more offence than calling Wollius's elements of the Mathematics, an epistle to the Germans, because he addresses his readers throughout in the second person; for as I have no inclination to dispute about words, I have complied with the established name of the first epistle of St John.

SECTION CLI.

The seventh verse of chap. v. is not genuine.

My reader will probably expect a word or two on the subject of the suspected text, 1 John v. 7. Having neither room nor inclination to repeat what others have said, I refer to the best account of the matter, in Bengelius's *Adparatus criticus*, p. 745—772. though he maintains the text to be genuine. As I am of opinion that it was interpolated, I need not lose time in proving what Bengelius not only admits, but proves for me.

The five following undeniable propositions are admitted and proved at large by Bengelius.

1. The text, "There are three that bear record in heaven," is not to be met with in a single Greek manuscript, written before the sixteenth century. It was mere ignorance, and very gross ignorance, that occasioned the pretence, that Stephens had found it in some manuscripts.

2. It was not inserted in the printed copies of the New Testament from any Greek manuscripts; but the Complutensians translated it from the Latin into Greek,

and from their edition it was afterward admitted into the other editions of the New Testament.

3. It occurs not in any ancient version, except the Latin. It is not to be found in the Syriac, Arabic, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, and Russian versions, and was interpolated in one of them in the fourteenth, in another, in the seventeenth century ; and in the rest it is totally omitted.

4. It is not extant in all the manuscripts of the Latin version. In those which have it, "The three that bear record in heaven," are placed sometimes before, sometimes after the three that bear record upon earth. And in many manuscripts of the Latin version it is not to be found in the text, but only in the margin.

5. The ancient fathers do not quote this text on occasions when they might be most expected to quote it.

If this text be admitted as genuine, then all those readings which occur in some manuscripts of the Latin version, and are not to be found in any Greek manuscript, must likewise be pronounced genuine. For it is a similar case, to oppose a single version, of which every copy has not the text in question, and which even knows not where to place it, to the concurrent testimony of all the Greek manuscripts, and of all the versions.

Add to this, that the text itself will not even admit a rational and consistent interpretation. St John means to prove, that Jesus was the Christ, not only when he was baptized with water, but when he shed his blood ; ver. 6. He appeals in the same verse to the witness which the Spirit had borne of this ; but the farther confirmation of this doctrine, he alleges the full number of witnesses, i. e. three witnesses to prove it.

1. The Spirit ; for the Spirit which had been poured out upon the Apostles attested this doctrine, and confirmed it by miracles.

2. The

2. The water of baptism ; for Jesus commanded us to baptize in his name, as in the name of the Son of God ; consequently that water bears witness to his being the Son of God.

3. The blood ; for Jesus himself sealed this doctrine with his blood, he having been crucified for professing himself to be the Messiah.

If therefore he adduced three witnesses in heaven, they must be distinct from those that bear witness in earth ; for it would be an artful and sophistical way of doubling the number of witnesses to produce one witness twice, in order to make up two sets of three witnesses each. But is it not manifest that in this case the Holy Ghost would be called in twice as a witness ? and that the testimony of the blood and the word, is the evidence of a single person, namely of Christ.

The arguments of the advocates for this text, if we pass over the invented plea of its being in some Greek manuscripts, which Bengelius plainly shews to be false, are as follows :

1. " It is quoted by some of the fathers." Tertullian adv. ad Praxean. chap. 25. writes thus. " Ita connexus patris in filio et filii in paraclete, tres efficit cohaerentes alterum ex altero, qui tres unam sunt, non unus quomodo dictum est, ego et Pater unum sumus." But might not Tertullian write all this, even if this text had never been in the New Testament ? He proves his point, " Tres unum sunt," not from this text, but from John x. 30. Is it not rather to be concluded, that he had never heard of this text, which he would else have chosen to quote preferably to the other ? At least these words are no evidence that Tertullian had seen our text. It was natural to use the same phrase, for the interpolator of St John's epistle made use of the language of the church at the time of his inventing this text.

Tertullian is the only authority quoted from the two first centuries; and the only one alledged in the third century is Cyprian. It is certain, that he writes in his epistle to Jubaianus; "Si templum Dei factus est, (si hæreticus) quæro, cujus Dei? si Creatoris; non potuit, quia in eum non credidit. Si Christi; nec ejus fieri potuit templum, qui negat Dominum Christum. Si Spiritus sancti; cum tres unum sint, quomodo placatus ei esse poterit, qui aut Patris, aut filii inimicus est?" It is observable that the words, Cum tres unum sint, are omitted in Erasmus's edition of Cyprian. But there is yet a plainer passage in his book de Ecclesia unitate; "Dicit dominus, ego et Pater unum sumus; et iterum de patre, et filio, et spiritu sancto scriptum est, ET TRES UNUM SUNT." I will admit that St Cyprian refers to this passage; but I ask all impartial examiners of Scripture, whether they judge a reading to be genuine because it is referred to by a single father of the three first centuries, whilst all the manuscripts, and all the versions, the Latin only excepted, contradict it? If they shall answer in the affirmative, we might soon expect a very different New Testament from the present; hardly any reading is so false as not to be met with in one of the fathers. Besides, Cyprian was bishop of Carthage, and the language of Carthage was not Greek but Latin, which the Romans propagated in Asia after the reduction of that great city; and as the Carthaginians adhered to the Latin church, the testimony of Cyprian proves nothing more than that this text was in the Latin version so early as in the third century. But as that version was become before Jerom's time a medley of all sorts of false readings and interpolations, it cannot decide the point, nor give it even a plausible appearance. But Benson in his dissertation on 1 John v. 7, 8. even denies, and with some probability, that Cyprian refers to our text. He is of opinion, that this father meant

meant only to give a myttical interpretation of the eighth verſe, and underſtood water, blood and ſpirit, to be emblems of the Trinity. He appeals for the probability of this to a paſſage in Eucherii queſtion. difficil in loca V. et Nov. Teſtam. where ſpeaking of the words, water, blood, and ſpirit, he writes thus. " If it be asked
 " what theſe words ſignify, I anſwer, that many interpret them of the Trinity. By the water they underſtand the Father, the Son by the blood, and the Holy Ghoſt by the ſpirit."

I need not mention the fathers of the fourth and fifth century, Phæbadius, Marius Victorinus Afer, Eucherius, and Vigilius Thapſentis, who were all Latin fathers. They are too modern; and they quote the Bible not from the Greek, but from the Latin verſion, of which moſt copies doubtleſs have this text. But I find in Fulgentius, who lived in the ſixth century, that not even all the Latin manuſcripts known in Africa make any mention of the three that bear record in heaven; for in his diſcuſ. object. Arian. he endeavours to ſupport this text, and writes, " Quod etiam beatiffimus Martyr Cyprianus
 " confitetur;" which would be ſuperfluous, if it occurred in all the manuſcripts.

2. It is argued that " The connection is imperfect
 " without this text." But might not three witneſſes be named on earth, without at the ſame time naming three in heaven? The words run thus in the Greek manuſcripts: " This is he that came by water and blood
 " even Jeſus Chriſt; not by water only, but by water and blood; and it is the ſpirit that beareth witneſs
 " becauſe the ſpirit is truth. For there are three that
 " bear witneſs in earth, the ſpirit, and the water, and
 " the blood; and theſe agree in one."

If any ſhould argue from the ninth verſe, " If we receive the witneſs of men the witneſs of God is greater;" I ſee not what uſe they can make of it. For it

is not necessary that this witness of God should be cited in a foregoing, it might be in a subsequent, passage, where St John adds ; " For this is the witness of God, i. e. God witnesseth even this. But I would ask these men, whether they deny the witness of the Holy Ghost to be the witness ? If not, they may find a divine witness among the three that bear witness in earth.

For the information of those who plead that the eighth verse begins with *xxi*, I must barely mention, that this is false ; and that in the Greek manuscripts the words stand thus ; *οτι τρις εστιν οι μαρτυρουντι επι της γης*.

I hope my reader will not interpret what I write as a denial of the eternal divinity of Christ, which is a truth sufficiently grounded in other passages, and infinitely dear to me. I profess before God, and upon the word of an honest man, that I believe Christ to be the true and Eternal God and the Jehovah. But I am unwilling to ground so important a truth upon an interpolated text, which was either first introduced into the New Testament thro' a pious fraud of the orthodox, or being written in the margin, by way of mystical exposition, was from thence transferred into the text by ignorant copyists. But if nothing will excuse my opinion, I beg at least to be thought as orthodox as Luther was, when he omitted this text in the first edition of his German translation.

SECTION CLII.

Some observations on the Revelation of St John.

As the Revelation of St John is not received by all Christians, and the subject is too copious to be discussed here, I reserve it till I come to consider the remaining catholic epistles. It is amply discussed by Wolfius, in his excellent prolegomena to this book. Bengelius's introduction to the various readings of it, p. 776—789.
should

should be read by those who desire to read the Revelation in Greek. I shall only add an observation or two not made by others.

It is matter of dispute, whether St John the Evangelist, or another John, wrote this Revelation. The stile is very different from that of St John's gospel and epistles. But as this difference consists only in the obscure Hebraisms, which abound in the Revelation, and as those other books are written in good and fluent Greek, the doubt may be removed. If St John wrote his Revelation soon after he came out of Judea, he might retain many phrases and constructions of words, which he diluted in process of time. However, I find in the Revelation some marks of the stile of St John the Apostle. Dr Twells has attempted to shew this, but I must confess that he doth violence to the language of the gospel and the Epistle to make out a similitude between them and the Revelation, and that he represents the words of Christ, which the Evangelist only translated verbatim into Greek, as characteristical of the stile of St John. But I have observed two things which appear to me pertinent here.

1. No writer of the New Testament calls Christ the Word of God, except only John the Evangelist, and that John who saw the Revelation.

2. Though the Revelation of St John be properly an epistle, yet it concludes with amen, and amen occurs frequently in other parts of it; and St John concludes his gospel, and his two first epistles, with this word.

If therefore it can only be proved, that the Revelation of St John was written early, I am ready to assent to what Twells confirms by a cloud of witnesses, that St John the Apostle, and not another of this name, was the author of this book.

Some of the ancients pretend, that it was written in the reign of Domitian, others in that of Claudius or Nero.

Nero. I believe it was written in the reign of Claudius, and appeal to Sir Isaac Newton, though that prodigy of learning grounds his opinion upon some arguments which are not solid. He alledges, for instance, that St Peter in his first epistle sometimes alludes to the Revelation, which could not be if St Peter wrote his first epistle at the time of the Council of Jerusalem, when St John was not in the Isle of Patmos, but still continued at Jerusalem; Gal. ii. 9. And the allusions to this book, which he discovers in the epistle to the Hebrews, were manifestly borrowed from the well known and received theology of the Jews. The rest of his arguments are unexceptionable.

I have so high an opinion of the divine understanding of Newton, that I cannot flatter myself with having discovered a proof in his positions, which was undiscovered by him. It is therefore with some diffidence that I lay before my reader the three following additional arguments for his opinion, that the Revelation was written so early as in the time of Claudius or Nero.

1. About the time when this book was written, the governors of the Christian church were still called *αγγελοι*, which is the Hebrew name *שליח עברי*. They are so called throughout the three first chapters. We meet with this name no where else in the New Testament, or in the writings of the primitive fathers. In the year 57, Timothy was obliged to appoint governors over this very church, to which chiefly the Revelation of St John was sent, and they were called *επισκοποι*, which has ever since been the title of the superintendents of Christian churches. Is it probable that St John would choose to be singular, in calling those *αγγελοι*, who had by custom obtained a different title? May we not then conclude, that his Revelation was written before the title of bishops was in use? before any bishops had been ordained at Ephesus? and consequently, before St Paul preached there?

there? For had St Paul been at Ephesus at the time when John sent his Revelation to the Ephesians, the contents of the epistle of Christ to the angel of the church at Ephesus, would have been different from what we find them at present to be.

2. The Revelation mentions no heresy as flourishing at that time, except only the sect of the Nicolaitans. Now as Irenæus asserts in his third book contra hæreses, c. 2. that this sect subsisted long before Cerinthus, and as St John wrote his epistle and his gospel against Cerinthus, between the years 65 and 68, the Revelation must have been written considerably earlier.

3 The Revelation concludes with an assurance, that Christ will come quickly, chap. xxii. 20. I cannot, without supposing *soon* and *late* to be synonymous words, and the promise to be an unmeaning riddle, interpret this of the second coming of Christ to judgment, which hath not taken place, at the distance of 1600 or 1700 years. But as St John towards the end of his gospel, chap. xxi. 22. makes use of the coming of Christ, as a phrase to signify the judgment impending over Jerusalem, it appears probable to me, that the same sense was intended in the Revelation. Consequently the Revelation must have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem, because it declares that calamity to be eminent.

Of all the arguments adduced by Newton, none is more cogent than that which is drawn from the Hebrew stile of the Revelation; from which he concludes, that St John must have written this book shortly after he had left Palestine, because his stile, in a later part of his life, was pure and fluent Greek. This argument is much strengthened by Bengelius in his *Adparatus criticus*, p. 778. Sect. 5. where he writes thus: "*Genuina (lectio) est gravis, simplex, et tamen interdum in uno tractu multifaria, pro rerum varietate; nec refugit enallagen, ellipsin*"
 " *Asyndeton*

“ *afyndeton, semper tamen explicabilis. Spectat huc*
 “ *maxime duorum casuum constructio. cap. i. 5. ἀπο*
 “ *Ιησὺ Χριστῷ ὁμαρτυρῶς ὁ πικρὸς, atque ita omnes codices.*
 “ *Porro pauciores, plures, c. ii. 20. τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ λίγους;*
 “ *iii. 12. τῆς καινῆς Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἢ καταβαίνουσα; viii. 9. τὸ τρίτον*
 “ *τῶν κτισμάτων τὰ ἔχοντα ψυχὰς, ix. 14. τῷ ἀγγέλῳ ὁ ἔχων τὴν*
 “ *σαλτιγγὰ; xiv. 12. τῶν ἀγίων οἱ τήροντες xviii. 11. ἰδὲ τὸν γόμεν*
 “ *αὐτὸν οὐδεὶς ἀγοράζει οὐκίτι γούρας χρυσοῦ; xx. 2. τὸν ὄραοντα,*
 “ *ὁ ὅρις ὁ ἀρχαῖος; xxi. 10, 12. τὴν πόλιν — ἔχουσα. Nec*
 “ *longe abeant illa, xiv. 9. τὸ θύρῳ καὶ τῇ εἰκόνι αὐτοῦ; xvii. 4.*
 “ *βδελυγμάτων καὶ τὰ ἀκαθάρτα, vel etiam iv. 4. vii. 9. xiii.*
 “ *3. Singulatim hæc exhibilare facile est; universa nemo*
 “ *convellet. In summa, Hebraismus toto regnat libro,*
 “ *prima specie insolens et asper, sed revera, cum adsue-*
 “ *veris, non solum tolerabilis, sed etiam dulcis, ac plane*
 “ *cælestis stilo curiæ dignus. Joannem tibi, lector Apo-*
 “ *calypseos, propone Hebraice cogitantem, Græce scri-*
 “ *bentem, et tute, quæ Græce legis, Hebraice reco-*
 “ *gita.”*

This circumstance of the time is very material to-
 wards the explanation of this book. For if what we
 have advanced be true, then the sixth chapter must be
 interpreted of the overthrow of the Jewish state; and
 the other prophecies will admit of an easy and natural
 interpretation, consistent with the history of the world,
 and of the church. But the same circumstance of time
 also exposes the mistake of those, who by a forced con-
 struction of chap. xxii. 18, 19. pretend, that St John
 concluded and sealed the canon of the New Testament.

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